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THODOXY:

ERSALISM AND ORTHODOXY:

A COURSE OF EIGHT

SERMONS

BY

REV. G. FORSEY.

"To the law and to the testimony."—ISAIAH.

"By manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."—PAUL.

OTTAWA:
CITIZEN PRINTING AND PUBLISHING COMPANY, SPARKS STREET.

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Preface.

The following Sermons were delivered to the Author's congregation in the village of Merrickville, Ontario, in the ordinary course of duty. In the judgment of many who heard them, they touch some of the living questions of the day, and are thought worthy of being committed to the printed page. The Author passes no opinion upon their merits; he is conscious that the great truths discussed are but imperfectly treated; but he has done the best he could, with the limited time at his disposal. It is the opinion of intelligent persons, that the defence of the truth here made has accomplished good in the community principally concerned, and the surrounding neighborhoods. Believing this, and hoping that more extended good may result, the discourses are sent forth upon their mission.

G. FORSEY.

Sermon I.

MAN'S FUTURE EXISTENCE ONE OF COMFORT OR TORMENT.

"But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst ^{at} good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and thou art tormented."—(Luke 16:25.)

The doctrine of a future existence has in every age engaged more or less the attention of men. Without a divine revelation men have thought such an existence possible, and have hazarded conjectures as to its nature or mode. A doctrine so important, so directly bearing upon the grounds, the matter, and the sanctions of the Christian religion, could not properly be open to doubt; to be received and made an article of faith it required a distinct, authoritative, clear disclosure. Revelation is the only source from which we could derive any satisfactory knowledge of a future duration; all other helps are more or less delusive. The want of the world in this department has been abundantly supplied by the sacred records, which, if they teach anything, make known to us the fact that man lives hereafter. Enoch and Elijah were translated that they should not see death; if they were not to see death they certainly were to live forever. The spirit of the Shunammite's son had left his body, but it had not become extinct; it returned to the child's body at the prayer of Elisha. In the book of Ecclesiastes allusion is made to the twofold nature of man: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Here there is nothing about extinction, but rather continuation of being. When Jesus was transfigured, Moses and Elias appeared talking with Him. The transfiguration took place A.D. 32. Elijah, or Elias, was translated B. C. 896, and Moses died B. C. 1451. Here then were the spirits of two men, one of whom had left the world 900 and the other 1480 years before, found to be existing and engaged in intelligent communication. Then Christ said to the Jews that God was the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, and that God was not the God of the dead but of the living. The legitimate inference is that those eminent men are living in another state of existence. Without tarrying to cite any more of the many proofs at hand, we recur to the text. Here two persons are referred to who lived once in this world, and who are set forth as existing beyond it, one in comfort, the other in torment. The usual objection to this portion of Scripture is that it is a parable, and therefore not conclusive on the matter of a future state. A Universalist writer, Dr. Thayer, says in his *Theology of Universalism*: "The point to be illustrated in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, is the rejection and punishment of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles into the privileges and blessings of the Gospel. This is the main scope and design of the parable, and the leading particulars have significance as follows:—

"(a) The rich man, clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day, represents the Jews, their wealth of spiritual privileges and blessings."

"(b) Lazarus, the beggar, feeding on crumbs, and full of sores, represents the Gentiles, their spiritual poverty and ignorance."

"(c) Their death represents, respectively, the change in their conditions, which took place on the setting up of the Gospel kingdom in the earth. The rich man dead, is the Jewish nation dead to, and deprived of, all its former privileges and gifts of divine knowledge. Lazarus dead, is the Gentiles dead to their former condition of spiritual poverty and unbelief."

"(d) Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, represents the Gentiles translated into the new life of Gospel faith, and knowledge, and salvation."

"(e) The rich man in torment, represents the Jews suffering the punishment of their sins in the destruction of their city and temple, and the sore calamities which have fallen on them ever since."

"(f) The great gulf represents the antagonism of unbelief between Jews and Christians (Gentiles), and the utter want of religious sympathy and fellowship which separates the two people."

"(g) The request of the rich man respecting his five brethren, and the reply of Abraham, are only put in to show the obstinacy of the Jews in their refusal to believe in Christ as the Messiah."—(p. 376.)

We here notice that the Universalist notion of this narrative, as given by Dr. Thayer, is pure assumption. For Dr. Thayer to assert the rich man means the Jews, and Lazarus the Gentiles, is no proof that such is the case. For his theory to be worthy of acceptance, he must show that it is founded upon reason, and free from contradictions, neither of which things has he accomplished. It is clear that this interpretation is given to get rid of all idea of a state of future retribution. The exposition is found in the learned doctor's chapter on "The Doctrine of Hell," which hell he considers to mean, and only mean, punishment in this life.

1. Dr. Thayer's idea of the death of those men, as "parabolic representatives, is not in accordance with fact. It is not true that the Jewish nation "is dead to, and deprived of, all its former privileges and gifts of divine knowledge." To all their former advantages was added the offer of the Gospel by Christ, and afterwards by his apostles. Since the dispersion they have had opportunities of salvation in common with other nations, which hundreds of them have embraced, and by which they have been saved. Neither is it true that the Gentiles are "dead to their former condition of spiritual poverty and unbelief." The vast majority of the Gentile world to-day are as much in spiritual poverty and unbelief as they were before Christ, many because they have not heard of him, others because they refuse to abandon Heathenism for Christianity.

2. Dr. Thayer states that "Lazarus in Abraham's bosom represents the Gentiles translated into the life of the Gospel," and on the next page he admits that "Abraham's bosom is a Jewish idiom or phrase for the blessed life of Paradise"; thus we are asked to believe that our Lord used this form of expression in a sense entirely foreign to its usual import, and without a word of explanation.

3. Then the rich man in torment represents the Jews suffering for their sins in the destruction of their city and temple. Jesus says the rich man lifted up his eyes in *hades*, or the unseen world, being in torments. Was the whole Jewish nation in *hades*? Were Jerusalem and the temple there? Titus and the Roman army? Was this world turned into *hades* for the time being to prepare the way for a Universalist exegesis of an important part of Scripture? The fact that this man was tormented in *another world*, shows that the Universalist theory of his suffering is baseless, opposed to express statement and common sense.

4. Dr. Thayer passes by the rich man's prayer for some alleviation of his sufferings. How was this? Did our learned friend's memory fail him here? If the Universalist interpretation of this narrative be correct, the Jews are everywhere praying Abraham to send the Gentiles to ease their torment. Then it is one tormented people asking to be helped by another tormented people, for Gentile nations have also suffered from destruction of their cities and dispersion, whereas the "parabolic representative" of the Gentiles was "comforted" in Abraham's bosom.

5. "The great gulf represents the antagonism of unbelief between Jews and Christians, and the utter want of religious sympathy," &c. Abraham declared the gulf was *impassable*; we must therefore come to the monstrous conclusion

that no Jew has become a Christian since the destruction of Jerusalem ; no Jew ever can—they are all on the other side of the gulf of unbelief, and can never believe. The story of the conversion of Dr. Freshman and others is mythical. While Universalists profess to believe in universal salvation, they consign all Jews to the shades of eternal unbelief ; in trying to explain away a hell, they make one.

6. "The request of the rich man respecting his five brethren, and the reply of Abraham, are only put in to show the obstinacy of the Jews in their refusal to believe in Christ." According to Christ, the rich man was in circumstances totally different to those of his five brethren ; he was tormented, they were not ; he desired they might not come into that place of torment. Taking the rich man as a "parabolic representative," we must believe the Jewish people are suffering, looking at the five brethren we must believe they are not ; Jerusalem was not captured, there was no dispersion. How a man's request for a certain benefit to others (a request not granted) can indicate the obstinacy of those for whom the appeal was made, and with which they were not made acquainted at the time, is not clear to ordinary minds. We leave the mystery with Dr. Thayer and his co-religionists.

Such are the historic contradictions and absurdities involved in the Universalist explanation of this narrative, and which place it in the list of those vain imaginations unworthy of acceptance and belief. Such an interpretation must at once be set aside by the intelligent as utterly untenable, as a creation falling to pieces with the weight of its own inconsistencies. In reply to the objection that this narrative is a parable, we reply, it is either a parable or a real history. If it be a parable, it is an illustration of a fact (Christ never illustrated falsehoods) ; if it be a history, it is the statement of a fact. Nothing is gained by the objection. The design of Christ to teach the doctrine of reward and punishment in a future state is clear from either parable or history. The history of the Rich Man and Lazarus bears internal evidence that it is a history and not a parable. The name of one of the parties is given ; our Lord had his own reasons for suppressing the name of the other. There is here all the circumstantiality, the correctness of reference, and the power of actual fact. It is a picture painted by the hand of Divine genius ; it is the drawing aside of the veil which shrouds the future, and the opening up of a scene of absorbing interest—a scene in which we are all concerned, and which makes one of two conditions a matter of certainty in the future.

Sometimes, in a mountainous country, you see two peaks or cones rising from the same base. As you look, one is cloud-capped, the other is sun-lit. You look again, and there is a change of atmosphere, the bright cone is now covered with gloom, while the one previously shadowed is luminous with radiant glory. As in nature, so in human life. One is ignorant, another is splendidly intelligent ; one is sorrowful, another is rejoicing ; one is deep in the troubles of poverty, another is immensely rich. Human life is full of contrasts, and so is human existence in the future.

Contrast the two men spoken of in the text. Look at Lazarus ; he was a *beggar*. His state of destitution appears from the fact of his being laid at the rich man's gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from his table. A poor beggar is often the subject of contempt. The well clothed, proud, heartless ones of these days often sweep majestically by, not deigning to bestow a glance upon the poor creature who looks wistfully for some token of their charity. They are afraid their trailing robes will suffer contamination by the beggar's touch, and hasten to give him a wide berth. We are not told that Lazarus received the succour for which he asked. The probability is he did not. It is likely he was rudely repulsed by the servants of the great man, who did not like to be annoyed with his importunities ; who would look upon any relief as so much encouragement for another visit ; and who would prefer seeing the splen-

did entrance to their master's mansion free from the encumbrance caused by the beggar's presence. The servants of rich men often out-Herod Herod. Their insolence to the poor is only exceeded by their ignorance of the proprieties of life. There are praiseworthy exceptions, but the rule holds. Reasoning from analogy, we doubt if Lazarus put in his mouth one crumb from the rich man's table. That he should ask for crumbs merely is significant; it looks as if he knew he could get nothing better. We have seen more than one poor beggar driven from the doors of the rich, and human nature was about the same in the days of Lazarus.

But Lazarus was not only a beggar, he was also *diseased*. He was "full of sores," the result, probably, of some long-continued, incurable distemper. Poor Lazarus! Poverty and affliction joined hands over him, and produced a culmination of suffering better imagined than described. The dogs had some degree of pity for him, more, perhaps, than the rich man and his household entertained. They came kindly, not savagely, and licked his sores. A dumb brute can sympathise with suffering, and will try to alleviate it as well as it knows how. Had the good nature of Lazarus' own species amounted to that of the dogs, he would have been taken from the street, placed in an almshouse, and cared for the remainder of his days. One may say, perhaps there was no almshouses in those days. Jerusalem had its Bethesda, or house of mercy, for the curing of disease; the people who went up to the temple gave alms; Zaccheus gave half of his goods to the poor. This shows that there was a system of poor relief; but it does not appear to have been applied in the case of Lazarus. He had no friends worthy of the name. True, certain persons might have laid him down at the rich man's gate; but this was a negative kind of friendship, there was little in it that showed the spirit of the good Samaritan. In Lazarus you have a poor, diseased, friendless man, not living, but existing, his life ebbing away beneath the pressure of circumstances, and the cold, cruel neglect of his contemporaries. The Lazaruses of modern times are not a few. Christ said, "the poor ye have always with you." Have you not seen the counterpart of Lazarus upon the highways of the world? You know something of the treatment they meet with notwithstanding our poor-houses, asylums, and places of refuge. The sight of our poor, afflicted fellow creatures should remind us of this Scripture narrative, and prompt us to duty. Many of the members of heaven's aristocracy are among the poor.

Let us now look at the other character in this picture—he was a *rich man*. Like another Baron Rothschild, or A. T. Stewart, he could count his gold by the millions of dollars. He doubtless lived in a magnificent house, erected in the first style of architecture, and rendered attractive by lavish ornamentation. The grounds adjacent, the principal entrance, the rooms for sleeping and feasting, were such as we would suppose in keeping with the wealth and requirements of a millionaire. Everything that Eastern ingenuity could furnish, and gold could buy, surrounded him, and ministered to a taste refined or vulgar according to circumstances.

This rich man *dressed well*—"he was clothed in purple and fine linen." The purple here referred to was a costly material; that and the fine linen made up the clothing of a person of high rank and ample means. The narrative simply means to tell us that this man dressed superbly; that he took pleasure in arraying his person in the most valuable and attractive fabrics of the times. I doubt not but he had many changes of raiment, almost as many as some modern individuals, who have a costume for every day in the year. As he sat in his house or reclined upon his couch, all his wishes were anticipated; as he went abroad, the multitude made way, showing proper deference to one of his standing and splendor.

Then again this rich man *lived well*—"he fared sumptuously every day." It was not only on anniversary occasions he ate a good dinner, but every day.

The produce of the countries of the then known world were laid under tribute to the repletion of his larder. There were first-class meats from the pasture lands in the vicinity of Jerusalem; leeks, rice, and onions from Egypt, and fruits from the plains of Jericho; while wines of the choicest vintage and most delicate flavor, home-made and foreign, added to the hilarity of the rich man's life. Artists in the culinary department prepared the dishes for his table, while numerous servants arranged them in the banqueting room so as to please his vanity and excite his desire. The sumptuous character of his entertainments led to a constant effort to procure something new, so as to afford variety and meet the wants of a fastidious palate. Thus he scattered his gold for the gratification of self; built, beautified, feasted, all for self, forgetful of the wants of the world around him.

The contrast in the life of the beggar and the rich man was perfect. How can we account for such inequalities in the circumstances of men? On the ground that there is a future state, where those inequalities will be explained, and the providence of God vindicated. We often wonder why good men have so little and wicked men have so much of nature's blessings. When we feel disposed to complain, we remember this is but temporary; a future world will reverse the order, clear up all misunderstandings, and "justify the ways of God to men." The complexion of the present life is a strong argument for a future state. Lazarus in his poverty, disease, and friendlessness, feared God, loved him, trusted him; the rich man in his palatial residence, costly apparel and sumptuous feasting, thought nothing of God or the future; he existed solely for the gratification of his baser nature, and he had his reward.

Death came to those two men. Death ever has been, and is impartial, he comes to all—to prince and peasant, civilized and savage, the strong and the weak; kings cannot defy him, gold cannot bribe him, subtlety cannot deceive him. He plucks the lovely flower from the tree of family life, and trails it in the dust; he blanches the cheek of the brave, and stiffens the arm of the athlete. Whatever our circumstances are, we must die. The beggar must bid adieu to his poverty, and the rich man to his broad acres, honors, and money bags. Death to the unsaved is the king of terrors, to the saved he is a messenger of love. He will come to us as one or the other.

Lazarus, no doubt, had the burial of a pauper. Without much ceremony he was settled in his rude resting-place, none mourning his decease. Thomas Noel's "Pauper's Drive" will apply to Lazarus:

"Oh! where are the mourners? Alas! there are none—
He has left not a gap in the world now he's gone;
Not a tear in the eye of child, woman or man;—
To the grave with his carcase as fast as you can.
Rattle his bones over the stones,
He's only a pauper that nobody owns."

The rich man also died and was buried. No doubt he had a grand funeral. Hundreds flocked to do honor to the remains of such an illustrious citizen. The pomp and pride of his life attended him to the grave; the money withheld from Lazarus and others of his class was squandered in foolish, vain display; display of which the poor body was unconscious, and upon which the spirit, in the light of eternity, would look with sorrow.

Hitherto we have looked at the Rich Man and Lazarus in this world; let us now follow them into the future state. With reverent eyes, and hushed breath, let us contemplate the awful realities of eternity. The narrative here is trumpet-tongued, it flashes light upon hidden verities, it lifts its index-finger, and cries—Look, learn, beware! It is remarkable that, so far as they relate to this world, our Lord makes use of no figurative language in regard to these men, every statement is perfectly literal; but when He begins to describe their situation in the future state He at once employs figure, and for the simple reason that this is the only way by which we can have any knowledge of that world. A description

of the future as it is, would be far above our comprehension. it would be like talking Greek or Sanscrit to an infant; we can only entertain an idea of the future world when robed in figures drawn from the present. Heaven is pictured by the revelator as a walled city, with gates of pearl, streets of gold, crystal river, tree of life, etc., etc. We gather from such language the ideas of security, magnificence, repose, immortality. Hell is said to be a lake or pit of fire, and the idea we get is intense suffering. Descriptions of the future state must of necessity be figurative to be of service to us, hence the use of metaphors by our Lord in the present case. Says Rev. William Arnot on this part of the history: "We pass from a foreground, where every object is distinctly seen, to a background where the real objects cannot be seen at all, and where, accordingly, only signals are thrown up to tell what is their bulk and their bearing. When the line of instruction goes through the separating veil, and expatiates in the unseen eternity, it must become dim and indistinct to our vision. * * * Even when the Lord of that unseen world is our instructor, our conceptions regarding it are necessarily indirect, second-hand, and obscure. In this region the capacity of the scholar is infantile, and, consequently, the ability of the teacher cannot find scope."

Following the thread of the narrative, we are told Lazarus "*was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom.*" Universalists themselves being witnesses, this means paradise or heaven, and such is the opinion of commentators in general. It was customary at Jewish feasts for persons to recline on couches, leaning on their elbow. The person whose head came near the breast of the other was said to lie in his bosom. The allusion to Lazarus is borrowed from this custom. The poverty and misery of life in the case of Lazarus were followed by comfort. "But Abraham said son, etc." Who shall describe this comfort? The blessedness of heaven is spoken of under various figures of speech. It is called rest, sitting on a throne, wearing a crown; but all these fail to represent its felicity. Says Richard Watson: "Heaven may be described as a state of eternal communication with God, and consecration to hallowed devotional and active exercises; from which will result uninterrupted increase of knowledge, holiness and joy to the glorified and immortalized assembly of the redeemed." This is comfort indeed. Lazarus enjoyed the comfort of God's smile, the Saviour's presence, and the Spirit's blessing. In Abraham's bosom he was sheltered from the attacks of poverty, pain and sin; before him was a future of endless peace, of unfading reward.

It is said of the rich man: "*And in hell he lifted up his eyes being in torments.*" What hell was this? The Greek word here translated "hell" is *hades*, and signifies the *unseen world*. The Saviour tells us then that the rich man lifted up his eyes in the unseen world, being in torments; in other language, he was in the place of punishment. Some persons try to break the force of this utterance by saying the original word here means the grave; but this is a feeble attempt to get out of a difficulty. How could a man lift up his eyes in the grave being in torments? There are no torments in the grave, the man, the person, the identity is not there, there is nothing there but dust. Understanding the grave to be meant, the statement is nonsense; taking the "unseen world" as the true rendering, we learn the state of the wicked after death is one of torment. We are told the lost man desired some alleviation of his suffering. We are not to suppose he had a body and a tongue, and that water was really asked for. There are men who try to throw ridicule upon our Lord's words by representing the absurdity of such materialistic conceptions in relation to a future state. Their profane attempts in this direction are sufficient indication of their disposition and character. They mirror themselves to the public gaze in anything but an enviable aspect, announce themselves of the school of Theodore Parker and Ingersoll. The Saviour taught that lost souls crave deliverance from pain, He could only make this known by a form of language appealing to our understand-

ing. The rich man's appeal was a prayer; he asked for a small favour, but this, trifling as it was, could not be granted. He that had every want supplied on earth, could not get the simplest boon in the unseen world. The doctrine of a future state of retribution is revealed in other parts of Scripture, as well as this, and commands our belief. Says Dr. John Hall: "It is easy for any man to produce a realistic picture of hell, and to purchase a cheap, but not enviable, notoriety by refuting it; but it is quite another thing to face the statements—the awful statements of the word of God, and succeed in explaining them away." Those who repudiate all idea of a penal state in the future world, would do well to lay the words of Dr. Hall to heart; it would save them from the hallucination that in demolishing their realistic pictures, they are destroying the hell of the Bible. Who are those that deny a hell? They are not the best of men who do so. With some exceptions, they are the godless classes of society, who fear a hell as a punishment for the sins they love, and which they are unwilling to abandon. It is just human nature to ignore what does not accord with our wishes and plans. The unbelievers in a hell impale themselves upon the horns of this dilemma:—If there be no hell, Christ is a false teacher; He deceived the people when He taught the doctrine; has led the world astray for eighteen hundred years, and the Bible is an unreliable book. Who is prepared to adopt this theory? I hope not one, it would be blasphemy; yet it is inevitable on the supposition before mentioned.

It would appear from the narrative that the lost in hell can see the saved in heaven. Though there is a great gulf fixed between the two states of existence, there is nothing unreasonable in our Saviour's teaching regarding a disembodied spirit. God is a spirit, and though without a physical eye or a tongue of flesh, he sees all things, his voice is heard throughout the Universe; it is quite conceivable that a human spirit should see afar off, and have means of communication. The objections of skeptics concerning the singular reversal of the laws which proportionate "the mutual power and extent of the senses of sight and hearing," show the weakness of their position. Some centuries ago the same objections would have held against the telescope, the electric telegraph and the telephone. By these instruments men to-day see and converse across gulfs of space; it is, therefore, foolish to quibble about the possibility of seeing and communicating in an immaterial world. Jesus says the rich man *saw* Lazarus afar off in Abraham's bosom, clothed with glory. He saw the heaven he might have gained, and from which he was forever excluded. This must have formed no mean element in his punishment. We cannot think that lost souls can ever become reconciled to their situation. They must ever burn with a desire to escape, and know that it is impossible.

We further learn that the lost have a remembrance of this life. Abraham said, "Son, remember." In the future state there will be no loss of the power to think; on the contrary, it will be terribly intensified. Memory will be a minister of suffering. The unsaved will remember that they had providential mercies, religious opportunities more or less frequent and valuable, that the grace that saves was offered and slighted. Memory in this life is often an avenger; Shakespeare's picture of Claudius, King of Denmark, in *Hamlet*, and Lady Macbeth trying to remove the blood stains from her hand, are true to life. Memory in both cases was a whip of scorpions. This thinking soul must think forever. Memory took the rich man back over the scenes of life; so will it be with all who perish.

The difference in the eternal condition of Lazarus and the rich man was not occasioned by social status, but by *character*. Their character is determined by the fact that one was rewarded and the other punished. Individual character will shape our future. Two states of existence are before us—one of comfort, one of torment—for which are we preparing? Our lives tell the tale. We are either going upward or downward—towards happiness or woe—every step we

take strengthens the probability one way or the other. Brethren reflect upon your course in life. If it be Scriptural adhere to it; if not, abandon it at once. Let not the chiming of the Universalist bell—"no hell, no hell, no hell"—lead you to surrender yourselves to sin, in the vain belief that you will come out all right in the end. There is a hell. The Great Teacher declares a man lifted up his eyes in the *unseen world* being in torments. This statement can never be explained away. It is useless for unbelievers in a hell to ignore it. In my next discourse I shall adduce proofs placing the existence of a hell beyond reasonable doubt. This narrative offers proof enough for an unbiassed mind. Accept it; offer your hearts, your services to Christ. Living a godly life, you will have no cause to fear future retribution.



Sermon II.

ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

“And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.”—(Matt. 25:46.)

From the history of the Rich Man and Lazarus, we proved, I trust to your satisfaction, that there is a future state of existence, and that this existence is one of comfort or torment. It now devolves upon me to show that the torment or punishment of the wicked, that is, those who die in sin, will be strictly and literally eternal. I do this to finish or complete the argument. To prove a penal state in the future, and fail to define its duration, would be to leave untouched half of the subject, and might be understood as an evidence of the weakness of our case. The eternity of future punishment is as easily proved as its existence; to fasten conviction in the public mind, both aspects of the question require clear and forcible presentation.

And is there not a cause? These are days of unbelief. The fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith are attacked on almost every hand; sometimes insidiously, sometimes boldly, sometimes learnedly, sometimes ignorantly; in most cases unfairly, and with a greater desire for the triumph of a party than for the advancement of truth. The dissemination of unbelief must be met by greater efforts to spread the true faith. We would be recreant to our duty if we allowed the enemy to scatter tares to the exclusion of the good seed. We must endeavour to “sow beside all waters,” making the cultivation of the moral soil and the glory of God our end and aim.

There are times in the history of the Church when some particular doctrine receives unusual notice, when its claims to popular credence are searchingly examined, and the results proclaimed. Eternal punishment is such a doctrine. It is criticised in all sorts of ways. The *animus* of most of the criticisms is sufficiently evident. It shows intense hatred of the thing itself, and often of the book that teaches it. Canon Farrar indulges in a storm of invective, and so do many others. Hatred of a subject is not the best preparation for a calm, honest examination; the case is decided before it comes into court; it is Judge Jeffreys and the Nonconformists over again with variations. The question with us is, Does the Bible teach eternal punishment? If it does, we have nothing to do but to preach it. We are not responsible for the doctrine; but we are responsible in the matter of hiding or proclaiming it.

The text occurs at the end of one of our Lord's discourses. Jesus sat upon the Mount of Olives, and while there his disciples came unto him, saying, “Tell us when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?” Unless we admit the disciples in this appeal were tautological, they asked two questions, first, “When shall these things be?” that is, the destruction of Jerusalem, referred to in the closing verses of the preceding chapter, and the demolition of the temple, foretold in Matt. 24:2; and, secondly, “What shall be the sign of Thy coming,” &c., to judge the world, and close the Christian dispensation, or age, *aion* as it is termed in the original. Our Lord proceeded at once to answer these two inquiries. He disposes of the first in the twenty-fourth chapter of the Gospel by Matthew, concluding at the forty-first verse. It would be presumptuous to say that every statement in the forty-one verses of Matt. 24 refers to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple; some of them have a more extended reference, and can only be fulfilled at the end of the world properly so called. In the forty-second verse (this and succeeding verses

ought to be added to the twenty-fifth chapter) the Saviour enters upon his reply to the second question. In the forty-fifth verse He refers to ministers (the Disciples and their successors) as being "made rulers over His household, to give them meat in due season," *i.e.*, to preach the Gospel. He promises reward to the "faithful and wise servant," and punishment to the "evil servant." As other Scriptures inform us, this will fully take place at the end of the Christian age, or when our Lord comes to judgment. Having the final judgment in view, in this connection, He says, "*Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins;*" &c.; not when Jerusalem is destroyed, but when "I come in person to reward my servants, and punish my adversaries." To the parable of the virgins, Jesus added that of the talents, concluded with a picture of the last judgment, winding up with the solemn utterance of the text, "*And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.*"

By the adjective pronoun *these* we are to understand the classes of sinners of whom he had been speaking, such as the foolish virgins in the parable of "The Ten Virgins," the wicked and slothful servant in the parable of "The Talents," and the hard-hearted, indifferent, uncharitable ones portrayed in the judgment scene. The text is not to be divorced from its context. It said of the virgins that they were refused admission to the marriage, that the door was shut, and that when they cried, "Lord, Lord, open to us," he answered, "I know you not." It is said of the wicked and slothful servant that he was cast into "outer darkness," where there was "weeping and gnashing of teeth." It is said of the uncharitable and cruel that they were to depart as "cursed into everlasting fire, &c." Now, those three descriptions refer to the final judgment; they are illustrations of the coming crisis in human history. Viewed in this light, they have point, meaning; they appeal to the conscience and heart, warn men to have done with sin, and to prepare to meet God. There are those who try to give them a different meaning, to explain them away. They come to the Scriptures with a creed already formulated, and cut them into fragments to make them fit their creed. We should not bring our creed to the Scriptures, we should come to the Scriptures for our creed. Dr. Thayer, in his "Theology of Universalism," p. 301, teaches that the everlasting punishment in the text means the punishment "into which the Jewish nation was sent on the destruction of their city and temple." It is very unfortunate for this piece of exegesis that the whole verse is antithetic, or presents points of contrast. If the going away into everlasting punishment mean the dispersion of the Jewish nation—a merely temporal visitation—then the going of the righteous into life eternal must mean a temporal blessing. The same language is used in both cases. If the verse teaches nothing about future punishment, it teaches nothing about future joy. According to Dr. Thayer, this Scripture offers no hope to the people of God. I need scarcely say that Dr. Thayer's is a strained, unnatural interpretation; in fact it is no interpretation at all. The passage was in the way of his system; he thought he would slash it with his Universalist sword, and put it out of the way. The plain, common-sense meaning of these words is just what they indicate. Christ had taught that the classes of persons mentioned in the three instances were punished; he shows in the text that the punishment is eternal.

As preliminary to the main argument we may notice that the Jews believed in eternal punishment. Josephus, the Jewish historian, says: "The Pharisees held that those who lived viciously in this life would be detained in an everlasting prison, subject to eternal punishment." Josephus himself was a strong believer in the same doctrine. The Alexandrian Jew Philo says: "Men think that death is the end of their troubles, whereas it is only the beginning of them. It is the lot of the wicked that they live in death, and suffer as it were continual death."—(F. E., p. 193.) Alger, a Universalist writer, quotes Philo as saying that the wicked are "banished into the place of the impious until the whole of eternity." Again, he says "the Jews seem to agree that the reprobate world would either

be left in the wretched regions of Sheol when the just arose, or else be thrust back after the judgment, to remain there forever."—(F. E., p. 323.) Dr. Adam Clarke quotes from Rabbi Joahanan these words: "I am going before the King of Kings, the holy and blessed God, who liveth and endureth for ever and ever; who, if he be angry with me, His anger will last forever, if he put me in prison, his bondage will be everlasting; if he condemn me to death, that death will be eternal."—(See Matt. 25, 3. These quotations are only a sample of much more to the same effect.

Canon Farrar endeavours to lessen the force of the Jewish belief in eternal punishment by quoting from *modern* Jews. The opinions of modern Jews are of no weight. What we require is the opinion of the Jewish nation in or about our Lord's time. Philo was contemporary with Christ, and Josephus nearly so, and their testimonies are conclusive as to the belief of the times. From what source did the Jews derive their ideas of eternal punishment? From David, who said: "And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts; if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, he will cast thee off forever."—(1 Chron., 28:9.) From Isaiah, who said: "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites, who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"—(Isaiah, 33:14.) From Daniel, who said: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."—(Daniel 12:2.) The teachings of the old Scriptures and the belief of the Jews concur, and form no mean argument for eternal punishment as held to-day.

We observe further that the early Christian fathers believed in eternal punishment. Justin Martyr, who flourished in the beginning of the second century, says God shall send the wicked "endued with eternal sensibility into everlasting fire with the wicked devils." Again he says, "every one is stepping forward into everlasting misery or happiness." Justin wrote much more to the same effect, and which we might quote, if necessary. Barnabas, who lived in the time of the Apostles, says: "The way of darkness is crooked and full of cursing; it is the way of eternal death." Ignatius, who was martyred A.D. 116, speaks in his epistles of "everlasting punishment to those who corrupt the Church of God." Polycarp speaks of "the eternal fire of God's judgment." Theophilus of Antioch directs attention to the "eternal punishment and eternal prizes of God." Irenæus teaches the doom of evil men and wicked spirits in the strongest language, such as "everlasting fire," "everlasting death." Clemens Romanus says: "If we disobey Christ's commands, nothing shall deliver us from eternal punishment." Tertullian taught "a future judgment and eternal punishment." Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, who lived in the latter part of the fourth century, is a well-known believer in the same doctrine. Jukes, in his "Restitution of all Things," admits that "the western church, led by his great authority, has generally accepted his view of eternal punishment."—(p. 96.)

The testimony of the fathers is important in all theological discussion. They were near to apostolic times, and likely to have true conceptions of the doctrines held by the apostolic college, and proclaimed by them to their fellow-men. That the fathers, as a rule, accepted and taught eternal punishment, is strong presumptive evidence that it was a prominent doctrine of the Church in its first and purest age. The opponents of eternal punishment may refer to Clemens Alexandrinus and Origen as teaching restorationism, but they are the exceptions and prove the rule. The historic fact regarding the belief of the early Church remains untouched.

We now come to the testimony of Scripture on this momentous subject. As a final court of appeal it will be found that the sacred word sustains the conclusions of

the courts below, and, while doing so, strengthens the case, giving it the force of a mathematical demonstration.

We first notice the class of Scriptures containing the words "eternal" and "everlasting," as applied to the subject in hand. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment."—(Matt. 25:46.) "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire."—(Matt. 25:41.) "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee; it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire."—(Matt. 18:8.) "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power."—(2 Thess. 1:7,9.) "He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation."—(Mark 3:29.) "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."—(Jude 7.)

I have examined these six passages in the original Greek, and find that the qualifying term or adjective, expressing the duration of the punishment, is the same in every instance. The word is *aionios*. Greek lexicons define this word as "eternal, everlasting, unlimited as to duration." Dr. Thayer is compelled to admit (see Theology of Universalism, Chap. XI, p. 339) that Aristotle defines *aion* as composed of *aei* and *on*, signifying "always being." He quotes Aristotle as saying "The infinite time of all things, and the period comprehending that infinity, is *aion*."—(p. 339.) Dr. Thayer also quotes from Diodorus Siculus, who lived about 44 years before Christ, as saying that "*ton apeiron aiona* means unlimited or indefinite time"—(p. 343.) Says Professor Stewart: "*Aion* in the New Testament usually means an indefinite, unlimited period of time; * * * ever, forever, time without end, eternity." Donnegan defines *aionios* to mean "of long duration, eternal, lasting, permanent." Dr. A. Clarke says, "the real grammatical meaning of *olam* and *aion* is eternal, all other meanings are accommodated." Liddell and Scott give as a meaning of *aion* "a long space of time, eternity;" of *aionios* "lasting, eternal." Wright agrees with Liddell and Scott.

From classic Greek then, as well as from learned interpretations of New Testament Greek, we conclude that *aion* and *aionios* mean primarily and properly endless duration. The punishment in the texts quoted containing the word *aionios*, is then eternal.

Nothing is gained by the objection of Universalists that *kolasis*, the word in the text translated punishment, means pruning or correction. It may sometimes mean this, but not always. The lexicons define it to be "chastisement, punishment, torment." Allowing, for argument's sake, *kolasis* means correction, the situation is not improved. What is everlasting correction, but everlasting punishment? A poor sinner need fear no worse hell than eternal pruning or chastisement. It is quite clear that the adjective governs the noun and determines the duration of the infliction.

Strong efforts are made by opponents of eternal punishment to weaken the force of the argument from *aionios* by saying that it is sometimes applied to things that cannot be eternal, and they jump to the extraordinary conclusion that because it may not always mean eternal duration, it cannot mean so in any case. Dr. Thayer, Mr. A. C. Thomas, Mr. Jukes, and others, spend much strength for naught in this direction. Says Rev. Marshall Randles: "It were as cogent to argue that because 'god' sometimes denotes a finite being, therefore it does so when applied to Jehovah; or that the heaven which Peter says saints are to inherit, means the firmament, because that is meant by the same word when the apostle speaks of 'the fowls of heaven;' or that 'life' means brute life in all cases because it has that meaning in some cases."—(For Ever, p. 28.) It is

worthy of remark that both Mr. Jukes and Dr. Thayer seem to take pleasure in referring principally to Old Testament adjectives expressive of duration, rather than to the New Testament. The reason is obvious. As eternal punishment is more especially a New Testament revelation, they had a better opportunity to kindle a fire, compass themselves about with sparks, and dazzle the eyes of the unwary. This great question can only be settled on New Testament authority.

I find, from a careful examination of "Gall's Interpreting Concordance of the New Testament," that *aion* is translated forever twenty-eight times, forever and ever twenty times, never five times, evermore three times, eternal twice; and that in every instance it means endless duration. *Aion* is translated world thirty-seven times. In quite a number of instances it means the moral and intelligent world, and suggests man's immortality or endless existence. Where the word describes a period of time, it has an exceptional and accommodated meaning, which supposes the true and original. Where it may mean the material world, it presents no difficulty. It would puzzle our opponents to prove that the matter of our earth may not be everlasting in some form, not inherently, but by the will of the Creator. It is worthy of note that the word usually translated world is *kosmos*, and not *aion*, the use of the latter word in this connection is the exception, and not the rule.

Says Joseph Cook: "*Aionios* is used sixty-six times in the New Testament. In fifty-one cases it is used to express the happiness of the righteous; twice to express the duration of God's attributes; six where it certainly denotes eternal duration. In the remaining seven instances it refers to the death of the wicked. It should be interpreted in the seven instances as it is in the fifty-nine."

We sum up as follows: Inasmuch as *aion* in many places is used to describe the eternity of God and Christ; *aionios* to describe the eternity of God and the Holy Spirit, in fifty-one places the happiness of the righteous, and in seven places the duration of future punishment; the conclusion is inevitable—what *aionios* teaches in regard to God and heaven, it declares respecting hell, and, therefore, eternal punishment is a doctrine of the bible. Deny eternal punishment, and you deny an eternal heaven and an eternal God.

We shall now consider several passages containing the Greek word *asbestos*, or unquenchable, as applied to hell fire. "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with *unquenchable* fire."—(Matt. 3:12.) This text is repeated by St. Luke. (See Luke 3:17.) "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be *quenched*; where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be *quenched*; where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out; it is better for thee to enter into the Kingdom of God with one eye than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire (*geennan tou puros*); where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."—(Mark 9:43-48.)

Says Mr. Randles: "That a fearful doom, and not a remedial purgation, was under contemplation, appears from its comparison with a millstone hanged about the neck, and cast into the sea." The word translated "hell" is *gehenna*, and is the Greek form of the Hebrew words *Gee Hinnom*, or valley of Hinnom. Into this valley was thrown all the filth of Jerusalem, carcases of dead animals, &c. To prevent the pollution of the air, fires were kept constantly burning. In the Jewish mind this valley was associated with everything that was loathsome and appalling, and our Lord used it to represent the place of future retribution. A reference more expressive could not have been made.

Opponents of eternal retribution try to make it appear that our Lord meant the literal valley of Hinnom as a place of punishment, and nothing more. This

will be seen to be entirely unfounded from three considerations. St. James, speaking of the tongue, says: "It setteth on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of *gehenna*." Now the human tongue could not be set on fire by the valley of Hinnom fire in the sense of the Apostle; he can only mean the *gehenna* of which the valley of Hinnom was the type. Then the Saviour tells his disciples not to fear "them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in *gehenna*,"—(Mat. 10:28.) It is obvious the soul could not be destroyed in the valley of Hinnom fire; the Saviour must, therefore, have referred to the place of future retribution. Then the valley of Hinnom fire has long since gone out, but the fire of our Lord's discourse is unquenchable. The word *asbestos* literally means inextinguishable, unquenchable. It may be said Greek writers use this word respecting martyr fires, the fire of the temple, &c., which have long since gone out. That proves nothing regarding its New Testament use. It cannot be made clear that Christ employed *asbestos* in any qualified sense. Universalists admit the word means unquenchable, and until they can prove that our Lord attached to it a limited meaning, their objections amount to nothing.

From the foregoing Scriptures, then, we further gather the doctrine of eternal punishment. As we inquire, the awful truth comes upon us with increased power—power sufficient to carry conviction to every unprejudiced mind. The word *gehenna* occurs twelve times in the New Testament, and in every case means the prison of the lost. This word proves the existence of a hell, and the word *asbestos*, unquenchable, proves its eternity.

We pass to notice other Scriptures teaching the same tremendous doctrine. "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name."—(Rev. 14:11.) Here the Greek translated for ever and ever is *to ages of ages*. What is this but true and proper eternity. Again we read, "For true and righteous are His judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand. And again they said Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever."—(Rev. 19:2,3.) Here the Greek translated for ever and ever is *to the ages of the ages*, a strong expression for eternity. Once more, "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever."—(Rev. 20:10.) Here again the Greek translated for ever and ever is *to the ages of the ages*.

We might remark here that the use of the words day and night is to accommodate the utterances to our ideas of ceaseless suffering. There is no day in perdition, it is everlasting night. The devil's punishment referred to in the text last quoted is to be shared by the wicked; they are to go to the place "prepared for the devil and his angels." Then I may say that the same form of expression, "to the ages of the ages," is used in several places to describe the reign and glory of God, and the reign of the saints in heaven. (See Rev. 11:15, 7:12, 5:13; 1 Peter 4:11, 5:11; 1 Tim. 1:17; Heb. 13:21; Gal. 1:5; Rev. 22:5, and many other passages.) This fixes the meaning of the phrase. As "to the ages of the ages" means the eternity of God, His glory, and the blessedness of the saved, we can only conclude it means, when applied to the torment of the lost, precisely the same. Here again we prove eternal punishment to be a doctrine of the Bible. The duration of God, of his glory, of heavenly joy, is the duration of punishment in hell.

Thus then from the belief of the Jews previous to, and in the days of, our Lord, the evidence of the early Christian fathers, and the direct testimony of Scripture as found in over one hundred and twenty texts, we prove eternal punishment. We have not taken every passage that might be pressed into the service; we leave them to future discourses. Eternal punishment is as fully

revealed in the New Testament as any other doctrine of Christianity ; it is not our business to find fault, but to believe. If we are prejudiced against this truth it is our duty to rise above it. Let us be honest with ourselves, with the future and with God. To resist conviction is to get on the high road to ruin ; there is nothing for such a man but the blackness of darkness for ever. Let us rather accept the truth, however unpalatable it may be, and make it our guide through life, and into the future world.

The doctrine of eternal punishment overthrows the theory of the Annihilationists. They believe God will punish the wicked, but that the punishment will be a single stroke, and result in extinction of being. Every argument advanced tells against this supposition. God will strike, but he will strike for ever.

Eternal punishment overthrows the theory of the Restorationists. I shall not discuss this theory here, I shall leave it to the proper place and time. From the reasonings presented you can judge of the baselessness of the assumption. Universal salvation is not a doctrine of the Bible ; on the contrary, it teaches that some will perish in the "eternal fire."

I have now to say we can all escape eternal punishment. There is an awful death in the future, but to save us from this Christ suffered the awful death of the cross. The Queen has many prisons in her empire ; but we are not to conclude from that fact that she wishes her subjects to inhabit them. They are only for those who will be criminal. Hell is prepared only for the perseveringly neglectful and wicked. God does not wish you to enter his prison ; He offers you heaven, happiness, glory eternal. If you go down to perdition, you will do so in opposition to God's will and purpose. Ask the Lord to save you and he will. Have done with sin, give Him your affection, your willing, life-long service ; say in this hour, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."



Sermon III.

OBJECTIONS TO ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die."—(Gen. 3:4.)

These are not the words of God, nor of an angel of light, nor of a man, they are the words of the devil, who appeared in Eden in the form of a serpent. His business there was to effect the ruin of the innocent and exalted pair whom God had created in his own image. It is reasonable to suppose that the moving impulse of Satan's attempt upon the rectitude and happiness of Adam and Eve was intense hatred of all moral excellence, and a desire to strike a blow at the purposes and sovereignty of God—that God who had driven him from heaven, and consigned him to his own place. The serpent proceeded about his work with characteristic subtlety. He first asked a question, "Yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the Garden?" On receiving the woman's answer that they were not to eat of the tree in the "midst of the garden" on pain of death, he uttered the first falsehood on record, "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die." Here Satan shows himself to be the father of lies. He flatly contradicts the declaration of the Almighty; the woman believes him, and falls into sin and condemnation.

The same leading principles that governed the divine administration in the case of the first human pair, direct God's dealings with man to-day. God said to original man, "Do this and live; fail to do this and die." So he speaks to us. Salvation is procured for every man, but its practical application is suspended upon the fulfilment of certain conditions, which are "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ,"—(Acts 20:21.) On compliance with these conditions any man during his probationary life can be saved; wilful indifference, open neglect, and studied contempt in this life, are followed by everlasting punishment in the world to come. Such is the clear and uniform teaching of the word of God.

I have chosen the words of the serpent as presenting a case somewhat analogous to that of the opponent of eternal punishment. Satan of old cried, "Ye shall not surely die," and men to-day say the same thing when they decry eternal retribution, and represent heaven as sure to the entire race at some future period. The belief of the ancient falsehood led to a temporal death, multiplied sorrows, and the exposure of the parties to death everlasting; the belief of the modern falsehood does, as a matter of fact, produce contempt for the claims of real religion, a desire for the pleasures of sin, and an unscriptural, vicious hope for the future. Paul speaks of certain persons who receive "not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie."—(2 Thess. 2:10, 11.) The text contains the spirit of most of the objections to eternal punishment. Our task is to show the unfounded and misleading nature of the appeal.

We shall look first at objections founded, as alleged, upon the Scriptures. All interpretations of passages teaching universal salvation are so many objections to the doctrine we hold, and which we believe to be the truth of God. A great deal is attempted to be made out of the promise to Abraham. God said, "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."—(Gen. 12:2, 3.) This is repeated in Gen. 22:17, with this variation,

"And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." It is concluded by Universalists that because God told Abraham all nations should be blessed in his seed, therefore all mankind will be saved. Only men in search of props for a system could draw such a conclusion from such premises. The promise says nothing of universal salvation, it speaks only of universal redemption. The promise in regard to the "great nation" was fulfilled in the Hebrew people. By Abraham's seed Christ is meant. He was "of the seed of Abraham," and by the blessing upon "all nations" through the seed, is meant the benefits accruing to universal man through the atonement. When we think of our race as doomed to perish without Christ, we can form some idea of the greatness of the blessing which places heaven within the reach of all. Men may all be saved, but all will not come to Christ that they "might have life." Another text generally put, as Rev. N. D. George says, "in blazing capitals or significant italics," is: "And so all Israel shall be saved."—(Rom. 11:26.) Yes, all Israel; but who are Israel? Are licentious, dishonest men, haters of God, "men without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful," are they Israel? Paul says "All are not Israel that are of Israel." He says nothing about universal salvation; he states that God's spiritual Israel shall be saved, and this no man of reason will for a moment doubt. Another text used is, "For he that is dead is freed from sin" (Rom. 6:7), and therefore all the dead are saved. Taking the Universalist interpretation of these words, a man dying of drunkenness or suicide is freed from sin, and therefore saved. Ahab, Jezebel, Judas Iscariot, Nero, the apostate Julian, Tom Payne, are all saved. Says Russell "Persons are said to be dead in several senses. A person is dead when the connection between the body and soul is dissolved; at other times a person is said in scripture language to be dead when his soul has lost the favor of God; and at other times a person is said to be dead who is crucified to the world, and the world to him." The text quoted refers to the latter death, as will be seen by noting its connection. Paul's subject in this chapter (Rom. 6) is death to sin and life in Christ. He says: "Knowing this that our old man is crucified (put to death) with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead (thus dead) is freed from sin. * * * Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God." He also asks "How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" Again, he said to living men, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."—(Col. 3, 3.) The text we are explaining, therefore, offers no support to Universalism. It simply shows the state of a Christian in this world who has given up all for Christ. Another passage put forward is "For I will not contend forever, neither will I be always wroth; for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made."—(Isaiah 57:16.) These words are dishonestly cut off from their context. Read the whole declaration from the 15th verse: "For thus saith the high and lofty one, &c." Here you learn that it is in reference to the "contrite and humble spirit," that God says "he will not contend forever," he will not "be always wroth." This is the Gospel. While God says so to the contrite, He says: "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." This text, then, taken as a proof that punishment is not eternal, is not at all to the purpose. It is just a glaring perversion of the word of God. We take another passage; "And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you, whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things." The word all in a text of scripture is sufficient to convince Universalists that it means the salvation of all men. This text is thought of such importance that Mr. Jukes has taken from it the title of his book on Restorationism. Says Rev. N. D. George, "The very point in debate is assumed, viz.: that the restitution of all things means the salvation of all our race in eternity. By the restitution of all things is to be understood the restoration of all things which will ever be restored in this world." Christ said to His disciples that

"Elias (John the Baptist) truly shall first come and restore all things."—(Matt. 17:11.) If to restore all things mean the salvation of all men, as Universalists would have it, then all mankind were saved in the days of John the Baptist. The text teaches that after the restitution of all things Christ will come, that is after the gospel is preached to every creature. So far is Peter from teaching universal salvation that he declares that "every soul which will not hear that prophet (Christ) shall be destroyed from among the people." The Universalist interpretation of this passage therefore hopelessly breaks down; it simply means the universal spread of the Christian dispensation, and has no reference to the salvation of all. Such scriptures as "And I if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all unto me," (John 12:32) and "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," (1 Cor. 15:22) are bulwarks of the Universalist faith. Now such texts are fulfilled in universal childhood, made members of the church of God through the unconditional benefits of the atonement. It is a fact that universal childhood is drawn to and made alive in Christ, and if all men died in infancy all would be saved. The texts only agree with other scriptures in this sense. We now take two passages together: "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth."—(Ephes. 1:10.) "And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself."—(Col. 1:20.) There is nothing here about the salvation of all men; these passages simply express God's purpose. The apostle speaks in the context of that, "which he hath purposed in himself." It is God's purpose to gather, to reconcile all; but man resists the designs of God, hence the loss of many souls. One more text: "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father,"—(Phil. 2:10, 11; Isaiah 45:23; Rom. 14:11.) This passage is one of several, as indicated by the references, upon which the theory of universal salvation is built; but it is no more here than elsewhere. These scriptures simply teach the final victory of Christ, over his people by his love, over his enemies by his irresistible power. All knees will bow to him, all tongues confess, but in the case of the wicked, unwillingly; they will be compelled to do that which they would not do. The devils confessed Christ in the days of his flesh.—(Luke 4:33-41.) If all that confess Christ are to be saved, then the confessing devils are saved.

The foregoing are samples of the Universalist method of dealing with the Scriptures. I could give many more, but the limits of a single sermon will not permit. By attempted critical examinations of the original tongues; by leaving out words in italics when it suits, and leaving others in; by a wholesale system of wresting and perversion, they give their scheme the semblance of plausibility. In the last chapter of Revelation an awful curse is pronounced against those who add to, or take from, the word of God; but these men fear nothing in their zeal against orthodox Christianity. I am free to say, without fear of contradiction, that there is not a text in all the Bible that teaches Universalism; on the contrary, they all set forth the commonly received doctrine. You can judge of the weight of Universalist objections to eternal punishment as drawn from scripture. Touched by the Ithuriel spear of an honest examination, they lose their fine covering, and, as Milton says of Satan in Paradise, "Up they start, discovered and surprised."

Let us now look at objections drawn from the character of God. Our opponents never tire of shouting "God is love!" But while they take special pains to hold up this glorious truth, they ignore the great fact that God is just. Universalism declares that because God is love, therefore mankind will be finally saved. There is no more reasonableness in this than in supposing that because a man is a loving father, all his children will escape crime, the prison and the

gallows, and attain to virtue and honor. Your love may wish this, but it cannot compel it; neither can the love of God compel men to be saved. The moment love steps beyond its sphere it ceases to be love, it is tyranny. The whole structure of Universalism is built upon a monstrous, one-sided representation of the divine nature. To hear the advocates of this theory you would suppose that love was not an attribute of God, but that it constituted God Himself, that love is God. As Rev. N. D. George puts it, you could construct any number of Gods on this basis. It is said "God is light," "God is a spirit," and that he is a "just God," and "the mighty one of Israel." Taking every perfection of God, as God, we could manufacture deities enough to rival the heathens of distant lands. We can take no one attribute of Deity and say it is God; it is simply untrue. The divine nature consists of a harmonious combination of moral qualities, neither of which is God, but all of which constitute God.

Our opponents object to eternal punishment on the ground "that it is contrary to the goodness of God." They say, "No truly benevolent being could see his creatures suffer forever." The same objection will apply to all suffering. If this statement has anything in it then God is too benevolent to permit pain or sorrow of any kind or degree. Taking the Universalist view of the divine goodness, then there can be no such thing as evil; there were no such judgments as the deluge, the overthrow of the cities of the plain, the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, the captivities of the Israelites, the destruction of Jerusalem! God was too good to permit such things. Then there are no famines, plagues, shipwrecks, wars, wasting diseases, accidents, and death to-day! God is too good to allow his creatures to be afflicted. Such are the absurdities into which our opponents would lead us. Is it a fact that all these evils, extending over a period of nearly 6,000 years, have fallen upon God's creature, man, in the face of the divine goodness? It is. If, then, God's benevolence can permit suffering, much of which was inflicted by himself, to last so long, he may allow it to continue for ever. No argument can be drawn from divine goodness to prove the contrary.

We may here observe that eternal punishment may be an effect of divine goodness. Suppose a punishment penal to the sufferers, and exemplary to others; as an example it is an outcome of goodness. This idea was in the apostle's mind when he wrote of Sodom and Gomorrah, who "are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." So says Rev. Marshall Randles. The appointment of such a penalty as a deterrent force, the faithful announcement of its existence to the world, and the making of a full provision to escape it, are developments of essential goodness. It may be said that fear is a false motive to which to appeal. This is taking for granted what ought to be proved. The scriptures clearly appeal to human fear. In God's dealings with the Israelites, he constantly worked upon their fear of retribution for sin; and St. Paul says, "knowing therefore the terror of the Lord we persuade men."—(2 Cor. 5:11). Shall man be wiser than God? As a being of absolute goodness, "God must of necessity punish sin, not only to uphold the majesty of his law, but to preserve the universe from its ravages." He has told us that punishment is everlasting, and we may rest assured there are reasons why it should be so, some of which appear to our finite minds, others are hid in the counsels of eternity.

Opponents of eternal punishment take as much trouble to ignore the justice of God as they do to exalt his goodness. Now God works in harmony with himself. We believe in the story of the angels' fall, their expulsion from heaven, and the glorification of God's justice as displayed in their punishment. We believe in Christ as a vicarious sacrifice for human sin, having borne the Father's wrath, and thus satisfied the claims of justice, and asserted its integrity. These articles of our faith are based upon the Scriptures. With such displays of divine justice in the past, we are prepared for further unfoldings in the future. The wrath of God is a factor in the development of his plans, and the government of

the universe. Its manifestation in the endless punishment of the wicked will show God's abhorrence of sin. The glory of God's power, wisdom and love shall shine for ever, and we have just as much reason to conclude that the glory of his justice will be everlasting.

We now consider some objections drawn from human sympathy. It is truly said that "the sympathies of human nature can never be a just rule by which to determine what is right in the divine government. The son of a governor of Kentucky was clearly convicted of murder, but was saved from the gallows by a pardon from his father, which it is evident he would have withheld from another man under the same circumstances. Here paternal sympathy was not only arrayed against justice, but also against mercy; for this murderer was suffered to go at large, and took the life of another man."—(Universalism not of the Bible, p. 44.) Human sympathy is capricious, interested, often more a matter of passion than reason; yet by such a standard Universalists would judge the procedure of the Almighty.

It is said "there is no proportion between sin for a lifetime, and an eternal penalty." This objection excites human sympathy in regard to the injustice complained of. But objectors lose sight of the fact that sin is an infinite evil. If we look at sin objectively, it is committed against an infinite being. In this world crime is measured by its object. The murder of a fellow man is a crime; but the murder of a father or mother is of a deeper dye, and while in the former case there may be extenuating circumstances, in the latter there can be none. A murder brings the penalty of imprisonment for a lifetime, though the act was done in a moment. Here the argument from disproportion will apply. If this special plea means anything, it sets up a standard for judicial procedure on the basis of penalties being equal in duration to the time taken in perpetrating the offence—a principle nowhere recognized, and which would be in every sense opposed to the administration of justice. Taking the objection as it stands, we contend there is proportion between sin and its everlasting penalty, because committed against an infinite being. Then for aught Universalists can prove to the contrary, sin may have an infinite range or effect. A thought may arise in a boy's mind, producing consequences to himself and others never ending. A sinner in time accepts the gospel, and the effect stretches into the future forever. It is just as conceivable that sin, though committed by a finite being, may have an interminable consequence, and demand everlasting punishment.—(See *For Ever*, p. 81.)

It is further objected to eternal punishment that it "involves the unconditional and eternal destruction of millions of infants, idiots, maniacs and heathens." We simply reply it involves nothing of the kind, and our Universalist objectors know it. This is a shining specimen of many attempts to foist upon Christianity and her doctrines the foul imaginations of men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. Christianity has survived such inflictions, and will survive. What can be thought of a system that lives by bearing such false witness? If it were of God, it would live without resorting to such methods; they would not be necessary to its existence. Christianity teaches the salvation of all infants through the atonement of Christ; of all idiots on the ground of their irresponsibility; of all maniacs, as such; of all the heathen who will be obedient to "the law written in their hearts," and manifested by the light of nature. That many of the heathen will perish there can be no doubt, but not of necessity; their situation does not preclude salvation. "In every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."—(Acts 10:35.) Thus we dispose of this ghastly caricature in the shape of an objection. We are not chargeable with the narrow views of men on these points. Arminianism gives no uncertain sound as to the possibilities in the cases mentioned.

It is also objected that eternal punishment "supposes the loss of all but a remnant of our race." This is a further indication that truth with our opponents is stranger than fiction. It is computed that one-half of our race die before reaching the age of responsibility, of whose salvation we are assured. Then God has always had a people among the adult classes. There were seven thousand men in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal; and there are more disciples of Christ abroad to-day than many think. Then if we refer to all who obtain mercy in a dying hour, the situation is anything but what Universalists picture it. We believe in the salvation of the majority of mankind. In the great contest between evil and good the victory will be with Christ, whose is "the kingdom, and the power, and the glory."

It is further objected to eternal punishment that "if the doctrine be true all heaven must be filled with sympathetic woe." We are asked, "Could the saved be happy knowing that relatives and friends were suffering endless pain?" The question proceeds upon the assumption that earthly relationship will form a feature of the heavenly world, than which nothing can be more unfounded. The idea is as old as the days of Christ. The Sadducees came to Him on one occasion putting a question about a woman who had seven husbands, asking whose wife she should be in the resurrection. "Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."—(Mat. 22:29, 30.) Christ teaches plainly that earthly ties are unknown in heaven. There will be neither father nor mother, husband nor wife, brother nor sister, known in the resurrection, the immortal state; we shall know no more about these things than the angels. The assumption being contrary to fact, the objection falls, as so many other creations of a disordered brain have fallen. Such impassioned appeals may influence silly people; but have no weight with well balanced minds. On the principle of this objection Abraham and Lazarus ought to have been filled with sorrow as they saw Dives, one of their nation, and a son of Abraham, in hell. They ought to have shrieked and become frantic, until the lost man was brought across the gulf, but there is no evidence of this. Lazarus was comforted in Abraham's bosom, the loss of the rich man did not affect his happiness. Lazarus illustrates the situation of all the saved. So far from sympathizing with rebels, they will sing, as St. John tells us, "Alleluia!" (Rev. 19:1-6) when the authority of God is vindicated, and his enemies punished.

It is also objected to eternal punishment that "it tends to make men infidels." This comes with a sorry grace from men who deny the God-head of Jesus Christ, the depravity of the human heart, a vicarious atonement, the freedom of the will, and other leading doctrines of Christianity. The infidelity is in the objection, and with the objectors. The whole opposition to eternal punishment is based upon pure and simple infidelity. It is not a fact that this doctrine makes men infidels. The preaching of the Church has been largely leavened with references to eternal punishment; it has helped to make the world what it is to-day, as regards its civilization and Christian culture. A doctrine that was so mighty in the hands of Jonathan Edwards and John Wesley in leading sinners to Christ, is no factor in the growth of unbelief.

I conclude by saying that no really valid objection is brought against eternal punishment. As a truth of God, it stands amid the shot and shell of hostile criticism, faithful in its warnings, awful in its majesty. Listen not, my hearers, to the Syren song, "Ye shall not surely die;" there is ruin in those words; rather believe in the possibility of eternal death, and seek earnestly to shun it. The belief of this truth darkens not the sunny aspect of the Christian life; it is simply a sombre background throwing into bolder outline the matchless love of Christ. Stand up for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Strong convictions and faithful testimony are the best cure, humanly speaking, for the skepticism of the day.

Sermon IV.

UNIVERSALISM.

"But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."—(Matt. 15:9.)

The controversy between human tradition and the commandments of God is not new, it dates back to the days of Christ. In the context we are told the Scribes and Pharisees came to our Lord asking why his disciples transgressed the tradition of the elders? Jesus met them by asking why they transgressed the commandment of God by their tradition? After adducing instances in which they did so, he applied to them a prediction of the prophet Isaiah, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

It is said by the wise man that "there is no new thing under the sun," and if the aspects of life to-day prove anything, they verify the statement. The exaltation of tradition above divine law was an offence of which the Scribes and Pharisees were known to be guilty, and before I get through I shall be able to show that this class of men live in their successors and followers of the present time. It is doubtful if many in this congregation know to what an extent Universalism makes void the commandment of God by its tradition. As a faithful public servant it is my duty to lay before you the facts, that you may judge wisely. Here I wish distinctly to state that I am not contending with individual men, but with a system, in my judgment, built upon an infidel basis, and in its influence only injurious to the lives and souls of men. Nothing but a strong conviction of the imperative necessities of the hour could prompt me to enter upon this line of discussion. I have a duty to perform; I leave results with God.

I have first to show that Universalism teaches for doctrines the commandments of men. I shall not trifle with you by presenting hearsay evidence, which in reality is no evidence at all. I take the standard works of the Universalist body, written by their leading men, and given to the world by their publishing houses. In two volumes which lie before me, there are the deliverances of no less than fourteen Universalist ministers. One of these books was published in 1862, and the other in 1878, and in their teaching substantially agree.

Universalism rejects the doctrine of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead. In this respect, as in others, it is one with Unitarianism. In "The Latest Word of Universalism," Dr. Gaines opens an essay on "The Divine Nature and Procedure," by observing, "To us there is but one God, the Father." Throughout the article all reference to a Trinity is ignored. Dr. Thayer, in his "Theology of Universalism" (see introduction p. 12), quotes from Channing, a noted Unitarian, a description of God, and says, "This is essentially the theology of Universalism." In his first chapter on "God, His Attributes," the same doctrine is taught. The God of Universalism consists of one person—the Father.

Universalism repudiates the Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ. It holds up the Saviour as the highest style of man; but nothing more. Rev. J. Smith Dodge speaks of him as "the unique man," of God's purpose being revealed in "a human life," of Christ's as "derived" from "the underived."—(See L. W. U., p. 71-72.) Dr. Thayer declares "While we believe in, and rejoicingly acknowledge, the pre-eminence of Christ in all things, we reject the doctrine of His

deity, or His equality with God." The learned doctor then enters upon a criticism of texts cited to prove the Trinity, and after disposing of them in characteristic style, tries to gather "Scriptural proofs against the Deity of Christ;" and winds up by saying "The whole tenor and drift of the New Testament is to the point that Christ is inferior to God, who alone is eternal, infinite and supreme; and that such are the grounds on which we reject the doctrine of the Trinity and affirm that God is one only."—(T. U., p. 108.)

It will be seen that by the rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity, and the assertion that God is one, the Holy Spirit is reduced to the level of a creature or an influence. Universalists may call Him the "Holy Spirit of Grace," but the words can only mean holy influence of grace; Scripture language may be employed, but in an accommodated sense.

It is difficult to see how Universalists can regard Christ as pre-eminent in all things, and the highest style of man, on their theory that He is a created being. He certainly claimed to be God. He said, "I and My Father are one."—(John 10:30.) "And now, O Father, glorify thou Me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."—(John 17:5.) Fancy a mere creature asking God to glorify him with Himself! When our Lord appeared to John in Patmos, He said, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."—(Rev. 1:8.) On the supposition I am noticing, these and other Scriptures teach what is untrue, and Christ was an impostor. Then on the Universalist theory the inspired writers teach false doctrine. St. John says "the word was God, * * * and the word was made flesh."—(John 1:1-14.) Paul says, "God was manifest in the flesh."—(1 Tim. 3:16.) "Christ came, who is God over all blessed forever."—(Rom. 9:5.) "Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God."—(Phil. 2:6.) "But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne O God is forever and ever."—(Heb. 1:8.) The attributes of the Deity are ascribed to Christ—eternity, immutability, omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, &c. The Holy Ghost is also called God; the attributes of Deity are ascribed to him in common with the Saviour; and all necessary intimations given that He is truly and properly Divine.—(See Acts 5:3-4; Heb. 9:14; Isaiah 11:2; Psalm 139:7; 1 Cor. 2:10).

In rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity; in reducing Christ and the Holy Spirit to the level of creatures, or a creature and an influence, Universalism stultifies itself, and teaches "for doctrines the commandments of men." We can hope but little from a system that rears itself upon such a basis; we may expect as we examine to discover much more equally startling and inimical to the interests of true religion, opposed to the belief of the general Church, and which, if true, would reduce Christianity to a series of conflicting and mutually destructive elements.

We observe further, Universalism rejects the doctrine of human depravity. Hear Dr. Thayer: "The plain doctrine of Scripture, direct and inferential, is that of the entire rectitude of human nature. Every mortal brought into existence is placed on the same moral level with Adam and Eve, equally innocent and pure, hindered in nothing more than they were, having the same moral qualities and unimpaired faculties, the same ability to reject evil and choose good."—(T. U., p. 152.) Rev. J. H. Tuttle, D. D., says: "Sin dwells in human nature, but it is no part of its organism." He also asks, "Does not human nature love moral cleanness?"—(L. W. U., p. 42-43.) Dr. Thayer speaks of "the monstrous doctrines of inherited corruption, original sin, total depravity, and the whole horrid brood to which they have given birth."—(T. U., p. 148.) We might extend these quotations at great length if necessary. What is the teaching of these authorized utterances of the Universalist denomination? Simply this, that transmitted moral corruption is a myth, and all are born naturally good. All the little children of our homes are under-sized Adams and Eves; we have only to plant a

garden and put them there naked to complete the picture. If this theory be true, it is passing strange the world has not heard of many cases of growth up to manhood retaining this natural goodness, expanding in it, and standing like Saul above their fellows ! The best of men have mourned their inherited evil. A cursory glance at the Scriptures will show that this doctrine is a commandment of men ; that original sin and total depravity are truths of the Bible. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."—(Gen. 6:5.) "The wicked are estranged from the womb ; they go astray as soon as they be born speaking lies."—(Psalm 58:3.) "Behold I was shapen in iniquity ; and in sin did my mother conceive me;"—(Psalm 51:5.) "And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others,"—(Ephes. 2:4.) "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God."—(1 Cor. 2:14.) If these passages are true, then the Universalist doctrine, human innocence, is a fable.

Universalism also rejects the doctrine of man's free agency. Says Dr. Thayer : "There is no form which opposition to the great truth of universal reconciliation takes, indicative of such entire ignorance of the nature of man, of the philosophy of the human affections, as that which so persistently sets up against it the doctrine of free agency, and argues from it that God will not compel men to be saved, will not forcethem into heaven."—(T. U., p. 54.) It will be gathered from these words that our learned friend has a cordial hatred of free agency. It is one of those awkward things that come so inconveniently in the way of one's pet schemes, and which, failing to find argument to overthrow, must be visited by the thunders of our denunciation. Like a true Universalist Nemesis, our admirable doctor swoops upon the vile thing, resolving to obliterate it from the minds of men, thus preparing the way for universal righteousness. But free agency lives. It lives in the plan of salvation, it lives in the Bible, it lives in human history. Every promise, precept, exhortation and threat that God has given to man, supposes his free agency. It would be folly to promise, command and threaten a being that was not free ; more than this, it would be unjust. Jesus Christ recognized this freedom when he wept over Jerusalem. On the Universalist notion that man cannot resist the purposes of God, his tears were hypocritical. Had he decided to save Jerusalem, the thing was done. God can accomplish his purposes, if he pleases, by Almighty power ; but not as a constitutional sovereign dealing with a being he has made free. Man has the power to resist God and perish. We readily admit God designs the salvation of all men ; but universal salvation will not be a fact in human history because of a wicked exercise, on the part of a sinner, of a constitutional power.

Universalism strongly repudiates the doctrine that Christ was a vicarious sacrifice for human sin. The commonly received idea is that God's wrath was treasured up against man for the violation of his law ; that infinite justice demanded reparation ; that none but an infinite being could meet the requirement ; and that therefore God was manifested in the flesh to make an infinitely meritorious propitiation, by which God could be just and a justifier of all who believe in Jesus. Dr. Thayer and his friends teach just the opposite. Says the Dr. : "Christ died, not because God was angry with us, not to save the world from the divine wrath and vengeance ; but because God loved the world."—(T. U., p. 132.) Again "There is no suffering of punishment in place of the guilty world ; no infliction of the penalties of the violated law on one who never offended : no satisfaction rendered to inexorable justice, * * * Nothing vicarious or substitutional whatever."—(*Ibid*, p. 126.) Again he observes "how utterly unfounded is the common doctrine of God's wrath against man."—(*Ibid*, p. 125.) On page 130 he speaks of "the death of Christ as an example." On page 144, speaking of Christ, he says : "He may be said to have borne our griefs and sorrows as John Howard bore the griets and sorrows of the prisoners and the

wretched whom he visited." On page 131 he says "The death of Christ is a recommendation of God's love to the world." These quotations teach :

1. God was never angry with man.
2. Christ suffered nothing for mankind.
3. Christ's death as a man (He is robbed of His Godhead) recommends God's love.
4. Christ's death was exemplary and philanthropic.

And yet, Dr. Thayer speaks of Christ as revealing "the true character of God;" of his death as "related in a peculiar and efficacious manner to our salvation;" as redeeming "mankind from the servitude and slavery of sin." How the death of a mere man, a martyr, such as John the Baptist or Stephen, could reveal God's character and accomplish the other wonderful things, we are not informed. Dr. Thayer is too charitable to puzzle his readers with metaphysical distinctions.

The foregoing attempt to give the *rationale* of the atonement is intensely unscripural and heretical. There is such a thing as unity in disorder; and this item of Universalist theology is at one with the general "confusion worse confounded" which forms the staple of Universalist belief. The view taken of the grounds of the atonement was necessary to give colour to the protest against the doctrine of endless punishment. If it could be shown that God never was, and is not, angry with the wicked, the presumption would be strong against any display of that principle in the future. The central idea of Universalism is that everlasting punishment is untrue; and every other part of the system is made to harmonize with this assumption.

A few passages of Scripture will show that Universalism, in the matter of the atonement, teaches for doctrine the commandments of men. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness."—(Rom. 1:18.) "The law worketh wrath."—(Rom. 4:15.) "The vessels of wrath fitted to destruction."—(Rom. 9:22.) Paul, again, speaking of certain sins, says "because of these things cometh the wrath of God on the children of disobedience."—(Eph. 5:6.) John the Baptist speaks of "the wrath to come."—(Matt. 3:7.) God says "So I swear in My wrath, they shall not enter into My rest."—(Heb. 3:11.) Paul speaks of mankind as "by nature the children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3); of "Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come" (1 Thess. 1:10); of being "saved from wrath through Him."—(Rom. 5:9.) The Greek word in the passages translated wrath is *orge*, which is defined by the lexicons to mean "anger, indignation, wrath." Then it is said "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law; being made a curse for us."—(Gal. 3:13.) Again "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."—(2 Cor. 5:21.) "He hath borne our griefs; He was wounded for our transgressions," see Isaiah 53. "Who His own self bear our sins in His own body on the tree."—(1 Peter 2:24.) These texts teach :

1. That there is such a thing as God's wrath against sin and sinners.
2. That Christ bore this wrath for us, and was therefore a vicarious sacrifice.
3. Through Christ, and on Gospel conditions, God is reconciled to man, and man to God.

Dr. Thayer ignores all the passages just quoted, proving the points stated except two, Gal. 3:13; Isaiah 53:4-6; the first of which he says "was a kind of proverb or popular saying," and the other impossible of a "literal interpretation." An old Latin proverb declares, *suppressio veri, suggestio falsi*. The learned doctor must have known those proof texts were in the New Testament; why pass them by and teach a doctrine they expressly repudiate? The situation does not look favorable to the doctor's ingenuousness; neither does it say much for the honesty of the system he wishes to establish.

Universalism further teaches that salvation is from sin, and not from the punishment due to sin. Says Dr. Thayer, "Salvation is moral and spiritual; it

is not exemption from the just retribution of wrong, but redemption from the wrong itself."—(T. U., p. 204.) Again he says, "It is not security from punishment, not a way or a means of escape from the penalty of actual transgression."—(p. 314.) Rev. E. C. Sweetser observes, "When a sin is committed, its legitimate consequences must inevitably follow; there is no possible salvation from them."—(L. W. U., p. 93.) Again, "To save a sinner from the punishment which he really deserves, would be to save him from that which he is sorely in need of. Such salvation would be an injury rather than a benefit to him"—(p. 94). These quotations are at least unambiguous, and cannot be charged with painting salvation in rose-colored tints; on the contrary, they surround it with the tempestuous atmosphere of punishment. Universalism is represented by its advocates as a sunny religion, clothing the countenance with smiles, and filling the heart with joy. Such representations can only be stretches of the imagination on the part of the less informed; such scholars as Thayer and Sweetser, chosen denominational writers, we must believe present the case correctly. According to Universalism, no poor sinner can hope to be saved from the punishment due to sin. He may be painfully conscious that he has sinned, may repent sincerely, offer his whole heart and life to God, become God's adopted child, but he cannot escape retribution, the uttermost farthing must be exacted. Ordinarily when a criminal is pardoned his punishment comes to an end, the remission of further punishment is the evidence of his forgiveness, he goes forth free from the penalty of law. But we are asked to believe that God is less just than man; that he professes to forgive, and yet does not forgive, inasmuch as he follows the sinner with retribution. It will be in vain for Universalists to say we admit as much when we say God chastises His children. Chastisement in the Scriptural sense is not punishment for sin, or retribution; as in the case of Job, who was "perfect and upright," it is discipline to make those better who are already good, a course of training in the school of life for the day of graduation. There is just the difference between retribution and God's dealings with his children that there is between a penal infliction by judicial authority and the training of a child at home. The Universalist idea of salvation is a monstrous distortion of the glorious plan. When God forgives a sinner, he saves him from the punishment due to sin (excepting certain physical consequences of a life of excess which he does not work a miracle to avert), as well as from its guilt and power. Paul says, "Being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him"—(Rom. 5:9). Of Christ he declares that He "delivered us from the wrath to come."—(1 Thess. 1:10). He again asserts, "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."—(1 Thess. 5:9). Wrath and salvation were in Paul's mind things opposed; to have salvation was to be saved from wrath or retribution. Before leaving this subject, we must quote an extraordinary utterance of Mr. Sweetser. Speaking of salvation, he says, "It cannot be accomplished in a single hour, as, for example, on a dying bed; it is a lifelong process, calling for constant consecration, daily struggle, hourly prayer and sacrifice."—(L. W. U., p. 101). Then we must conclude the penitent thief is not saved, and many others who asked mercy in a dying hour. If salvation can only be secured by a "lifelong process," the case of sinners of forty, fifty and sixty years standing, is hopeless. On Mr. Sweetser's showing they cannot be saved, and yet Universalism provides no hell for them. Where are they to go? And then what becomes of Universal salvation? If words mean anything, this recognized champion of the new gospel knocks the foundation from under his own feet, and surrounds himself with chaotic ruin.

It is also asserted by Universalism that the present life "is not a state of probation, but of retribution; that the penalty due to sin is inflicted here." I quote Dr. Thayer's language as found in his "Theology," chapter VIII, section IV. To prove his point he refers to the story of Joseph and his brethren, to the judgments that fell upon the Israelites, to the death of the sons of Eli, of

Balaam, of Saul, Belshazzar and Haman. After citing these and a few other illustrations, he considers his case made out, and closes the section. We do not deny that there is a measure of retribution in this life. That a part of the penalty of unrepented sin should be inflicted is quite consistent with a state of probation. This is all Dr. Thayer has proved; he does not advance the first argument to show that the whole penalty of sin follows in this world. In the "Latest Word of Universalism," p. 157, the Rev. John C. Adams observes, "In one sense we may say the present life is a probation," and on the next page he says, "we are not to consider this life as determining the final destiny of the soul." To sustain the latter statement Mr. Adams can find no Scriptures; he does not even present respectable argument; he speaks of what is "probable," of what his system "affirms," of what "may be." Like Gratiano, in Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice, Mr. Adams "speaks an infinite deal of nothing. His reasons are two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find them, and, when you have them, they are not worth the search." That human life is probational is proved by an array of Scripture testimony. For an elaboration of the argument, and proof texts, I refer the reader to sermon VI. of this series, titled, "Restorationism."

Here I must bring this discourse to a conclusion. In another and succeeding sermon I shall examine other points of Universalist theology, show how far the positions assumed are from the truth, thus preparing a strong indictment against the system. We have gone far enough in this investigation to see that as a religious order Universalism lives by putting divine truth through a process of its own, and that in the manipulation truth loses its identity. There are other startling revelations at hand. Your patience and perseverance are asked for further inquiries.



Sermon V.

UNIVERSALISM.

"But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."—(Matt. 15:9.)

Universalism lays it down as a fundamental doctrine that all the dead in the resurrection will be holy. Mr. Able C. Thomas, as quoted by Rev. John B. Power, declares, "The fact that some men are not in Christ in the present life, is not to the purpose; for however they may live or die, they will all be made alive in Christ, in incorruption, power, glory, in the image of the heavenly." Dr. Thayer says, "in the resurrection, when the end comes, the wicked will cease to be wicked, and all will be purified, redeemed and exalted in Christ."—(T. U., p. 226.) These citations are only a few of many that might be made. It is not pretended that all men die holy, but it is boldly asserted that all mankind will be raised in holiness; this of course supposes a work of grace wrought in the impenitent dead between death and the resurrection. It will be a sufficient refutation of this unscriptural assumption to quote those passages which show that all the dead in the resurrection will not be holy, that the subjects of the resurrection will compose two classes, the righteous and the wicked. Daniel predicts, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."—(Dan. 12:2.) Here we have the two classes. Universalism tries to evade the force of this text by saying that Daniel means a figurative, and not a literal resurrection. When a passage presses a Universalist he generally makes the discovery that it either applies to the Jews, or is figurative. If the resurrection referred to by Daniel be figurative, then the attendant circumstances must be figurative also. The following will then be its true meaning: "And many of them that figuratively sleep in the figurative dust of the figurative earth, shall figuratively awake, some to figurative everlasting life, and some to figurative shame, and figurative everlasting contempt." And then why not take the next verse? "And they that be figuratively wise shall figuratively shine as the figurative brightness of the figurative firmament, and they that figuratively turn many to figurative righteousness as the figurative stars for ever and ever." It is evident the figurative interpretation breaks hopelessly down. The concluding verse of the chapter proves that a literal resurrection is intended. "But go thou thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest, (sleep in death) and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." Take another passage: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation."—(John 5:28,29.) Of course this Scripture is figurative too, and for the simple reason that unless this construction be put upon it the fate of Universalism is sealed. Dr. Thayer remarks, "The Saviour is speaking here of a moral or spiritual, and not a literal resurrection." This is in effect charging our Lord with unmeaning and useless repetition. In the 25th verse he refers to a moral resurrection: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live;" that is, the spiritually dead who hear his voice shall attain to spiritual life. It would appear as if some marveled at this. Noticing the effect of his words, he said, "Marvel not at this," (a greater work than this that I have told you of is yet to be accomplished) "for

the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice," &c. Says Rev. John B. Power, "If this is a moral resurrection of the soul, the whole must prove to be a perfect failure. As without faith it is impossible to please God, those who 'have done good' must have had this faith, and believing, have passed from spiritual death unto spiritual life, and cannot need this resurrection, having experienced it already. And as those who 'have done evil,' must be destitute of this faith, and in a state of condemnation, and as they are to be raised to a state of condemnation or damnation, their moral condition must be the same after as before." In neither case does this resurrection accomplish anything. Such an interpretation reduces our Saviour's solemn teaching to an absurdity. The conclusion is inevitable, Jesus taught a literal resurrection of the righteous and the wicked. The testimony of St. Paul on this question is one with that of Christ. He says, "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."—(Acts 24:15.) In the vision of the resurrection which John saw, we have plain indication of the presence of the wicked; for it is said, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."—(Rev. 20:15.) Thus we see that Universalism has no foundation for its assumption that all the dead in the resurrection will be holy. In this, as in other matters, it is found guilty of bearing false witness to the world.

A marked feature of Universalism is its strong und determined opposition to the doctrine of a future and general judgment of all men at the last day. Its contention is "that the judgment day of Christ began with the opening of his kingdom; and one of the first and most momentous displays of His authority is exhibited in the punishment of the Jews. * * * This judgment has been going on from that day to this, progressive, continual, and will go on till he surrender back again to God the kingdom and power which He received from Him."—(Thayer's Theology, p. 255.) Again we read, "The judgment is spiritual, and not literal; or, in other words, it is by the truth, by the Gospel, and not in person."—(*Ibid*, p. 259.) Again, "The 'last day' is applied to the gospel day because the Christian dispensation is final. In this judgment day of the gospel, all are to appear at the bar of truth, and be tried by the word of God."—(*Ibid*, 260.) In proof of the soundness of their position, Universalists quote our Lord as saying, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out," *i. e.*, says Dr. Thayer, "error and sin represented under the figure of a prince ruling the world." Then we must conclude there is no error, no sin in the world to-day; all disappeared in the days of Christ. The true meaning of the passage is, now is the judgment of this, the Jewish world, because they reject me as the Messiah; now shall the prince of this world, Satan, be cast out by the redemptive plan which I am about to perfect. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto me." Our opponents delight to quote the word "men" in the text last given, a word not found in the Greek, and in no way necessary to the sense. The reason is obvious, it helps to give the passage a Universalist colouring. No truths are more clearly revealed in Scripture than the second coming of Christ, and the general judgment. When our Lord ascended the "two men in white apparel" gave unmistakable testimony to the fact of the second coming. "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."—(Acts 1:11.) The Saviour's departure was personal, literal, and visible; he shall come in like manner. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first."—(1 Thess. 4:16.) Here the same great truth is declared, with the addition that the dead in Christ shall rise first; this implies that the dead out of Christ shall rise after; all will not therefore be holy in the judgment. Then as to the fact of the judgment, we are told

"we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ."—(Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor., 5:10.) "He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained."—(Acts 17:31.) The fallen angels are "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."—(Jude 6.) These scriptures are a few of many that might be quoted in proof of the ordination of a specific period for the judgment of men and angels. As to whether the day will be of twenty-four hours duration, is not material to the argument. It will be a day longer or shorter in the future, and not the day of the Christian dispensation.

The Bible doctrine of a hell, or place of future retribution, is in strong disfavour with Universalists. Very often they resort to ridicule in dealing with this subject; but when this is likely to be regarded as a thin covering for weakness, they attempt something like argument. Dr. Thayer tries hard to "explode the whole theory of future punishment. In his chapters titled, "Doctrine of Damnation," and "Doctrine of Hell," he restricts all punishment to the present life. Speaking of the Greek words *krino*, *krima*, *krisis*, he says, "There is nothing in any of the passages where the Greek words occur, however translated, to lead us to imagine that they ever thought of any suffering or punishment beyond this life. They (the evangelists) employed them in reference to human tribunals and punishments."—(T. U. p. 327.) The learned doctor then enters upon a critical examination of the Hebrew word *sheol*, and the Greek words *hades*, *gehenna*, and *tartaros*, reaching the conclusion that they teach nothing regarding a penal state in the future world.

Without attempting to follow Dr. Thayer through the labyrinthian windings of his peculiar criticism, we may say that while *sheol* in the Old Testament generally means the place of separate spirits or the grave, there are passages which undoubtedly show it has a more extended meaning. In Job 11:8, we read, "It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? Deeper than *sheol*, what canst thou know?" Again, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in *sheol*, behold thou art there."—(Psalm 139:8.) Again, "Though they dig into *sheol*, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down."—(Amos 9:2.) In these texts, says Kitto, "*sheol* denotes the opposite of heaven, which cannot be the grave, nor the general state or region of the dead, but hell." But there is something more decisive. "The wicked shall be turned into *sheol*, and all the nations that forget God."—(Psalm 9:17.) *Sheol* here cannot mean the state of all the dead, or the grave, for all go there, righteous and wicked; it must signify a place or state of penal suffering from which the righteous are saved. Of a wicked woman it is said, "Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on *sheol*."—(Prov. 5:5.) Here again *sheol* must mean more than the common lot of men. The text describes the end of a vicious life, as distinguished from a virtuous one, and is spoken as a warning. A warning has no force unless there is something to be apprehended, from which there is a possibility of escape. Regarding a child it is said, "Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from *sheol*."—(Prov. 23:14.) *Sheol* in this case can only mean a place of punishment, from which, by proper training, it is possible to save the young. Thus says Rev. R. Watson, "while the Old Testament employs *sheol* in most cases to designate the grave, the region of the dead, it employs it also, in some cases, to designate along with this idea the adjunct one of a place of misery, region of woe." Yet Dr. Thayer contends that *sheol* throughout the Old Testament signifies the grave only, or the place of separate spirits.

We now look at the Greek word *hades*. This word literally means, says Kitto, "that which is in darkness"—in other language a hidden, concealed state, or world. It is freely admitted that *hades* of itself does not necessarily imply a place of future suffering. The connection of the word in a given place will determine whether it simply signifies the unseen world, or a state of punish-

ment in that world. When the Lord said, "Thou art Peter: and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of *hades* shall not prevail against it," he certainly meant more than the gates of the region of the dead; he referred to certain malignant powers—living, active—which, while suffering the displeasure of the Head of the Church, would attempt its overthrow. The utterance is only intelligible in this sense. These words suppose enmity, enmity supposes guilt, guilt supposes punishment, and all this in *hades*. "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to *hades*,"—(Matt. 11:23; Luke 10:15.) The Saviour here could not mean that the material city named would be turned into *hades*; he could only refer to its inhabitants, and that not in an ordinary sense. By death, the people would go to *hades* in any case, and, if this only was indicated, the statement was a truism. That Christ's declaration foretold suffering in *hades* is evident from the reference to Sodom, which people are said to be "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." The statement that it shall be more tolerable for Sodom than Capernaum, shows the terrible nature of the punishment the inhabitants of Capernaum were to endure. In the first discourse of the series, I have referred, at length, to the rich man as being "tormented" in *hades*. This, with other instances, show that the word *hades* is used in connections which teach a place of future retribution.

We now come to the Greek word *gehenna*. Rev. J. Cass, in his pamphlet titled "Is there a Hell?" makes the following pertinent observations:—"It is now agreed by most men—theologians, critics, historians and poets, whether Christian or infidel, and is beyond successful contradiction from any man, that during our Lord's sojourn on earth, and for at least two hundred years prior to His advent, the Jews employed the phrase 'Valley of Hinnom' as a symbol of the fearful retribution of the future world. * * * This valley with all its sickening and horrible associations, was seized upon by Jesus Christ, and by him made to represent the place and condition of all wicked men in the world to come." No one can examine the passages in the New Testament containing the word *gehenna* without coming to the conclusion that they teach a place of future torment. Speaking of Matt. 5:21-22, Stewart says: "It follows, of course, that though *gehenna* is here referred to in its literal sense, yet the meaning of the whole passage does not permit us to understand the idea intended to be conveyed as a literal one. It is employed as a source of imagery to describe the punishment of a future world." In Matt. 5:29-30, the word translated hell is *gehenna*. As Cass truly remarks, this could not mean a literal casting into *gehenna*, for who could have a knowledge of the offence of an eye or a hand to execute the sentence? It must mean a punishment which God would inflict. In Matt. 23:15 Christ told the Scribes and Pharisees that when they made a proselyte they made him two-fold more the child of *gehenna* than themselves. This could not have been a literal reference to the valley of Hinnom, for there was no Jewish law authorizing the burning of a man for becoming a Pharisee; our Saviour had the *gehenna* of the future world in view. Our Lord says again, "Be not afraid of them that kill the body. * * * Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into *gehenna*."—(Luke 12:4, 5.) A dead man fears nothing from an earthly fire. The caution has no point if applied to the literal *gehenna*, it supposes punishment after the physical life is extinct which God alone can impose, what is this but the *gehenna* of the future world? Can any intelligent person suppose that when Christ exclaimed, "How can ye escape the damnation of *gehenna*?" he meant the literal *gehenna*? The whole of the circumstances connected with the utterance are against any such conclusion; both reason and religion point to the future. Here we pause with the assurance that the other passages of the twelve containing the word *gehenna* are equally conclusive on this subject.

Thus have we shown that a hell is indicated in some instances by *sheol* and *hades*, and clearly taught by the word *gehenna*. The hell of the Bible cannot be reasoned out of existence. We reject the sophisms of Dr. Thayer and his friends, and believe in a state or place of future retribution.

Universalism takes the position that Satan or the devil, spoken of in Scripture, is a figure of speech. On this point we must bring the redoubtable Thayer again to the front. He says: "His name, Devil, and its synonym Satan, were employed as metaphors by the Saviour, to represent the hostility to the gospel of the Jewish hierarchy. They were described as the devil or evil one who sought to destroy the word of God, and their agents as his angels."—(T. U. p. 421.) Dr. Thayer also remarks, "The apostles employ the word as a figure to represent the heathen secular power, in opposition to Christianity."—(p. 422.) Our opponents appear to have a great desire to remove all unpleasant things out of our way, such as human depravity, the wrath of God, a general judgment, future punishment, the devil, etc. We may, however, reasonably doubt if the last-named personage is dismissed from the world by a Universalist negative. We call for proof of Dr. Thayer's assumption, and we find the quotations above are the best he has to offer. Accepting our learned friend's idea, it was a figure of speech that tempted Eve, and brought about the calamitous results of the fall. Naughty figure of speech! It was a figure of speech that afflicted poor Job. Cruel figure of speech! I hope there are none such in our mother-tongue. It was a figure of speech that tempted David to number Israel. Mathematical figure of speech! It was a figure of speech that tempted the Saviour in the wilderness, that knew the stones could be made into bread, that soared to the pinnacle of the temple, and to an exceeding high mountain. Discerning, aspiring figure of speech! They were figures of speech which our Lord cast out of many, which entered into the herd of swine, and drowned them in the sea. Strange figures of speech, they had a changeable affinity, now for human flesh, then for swine's flesh! That is a figure of speech which Peter tells us goes about as a roaring lion, &c. Noisy, savage figure of speech! Seriously, the great enemy of God and man is not a metaphor; but a personality, possessing all the attributes of being. He is one of those "angels that kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation."—(Jude 6.) Personal names are applied to him. He is termed "Belial" which signifies wicked, "Abaddon" and "Appollyon" which mean destroyer, "Satan" which is an adversary. Our Lord terms him "a murderer from the beginning." He is also said to be "the prince of this world," the "God of this world," and "the wicked one." Personal acts are ascribed to him. He is declared to be "the prince of devils," which indicates that he exercises dominion over other fallen angels; the spirit that "worketh in the children of disobedience;" to walk about "seeking whom he may devour." Personal punishment is to be inflicted upon him. He is to be bound by an angel, then loosed, then cast into the lake of fire.—(See Rev. 20.) Says Mr. Watson, "In these various passages of scripture, and many others which might be added, the existence of the devil is clearly stated; but if, as some modern Sadducees affirm, nothing more is intended than a personification of the abstract quality of evil, the Bible, and especially the New Testament, must be eminently calculated to mislead us." Those who by a sort of mental legerdemain give prominence to the personification idea, must accept the dilemma involved.

From the foregoing examination of the tenets of the Universalist body it will be gathered that as a denomination it teaches "for doctrines the commandments of men." What doctrine of Christianity is there that Universalism does not discard? Is there one? There is scarcely one. In some cases it positively rejects, in others it gives such an explanation as reduces the teaching of the Bible to an absurdity. Looking at this scheme of theology without prejudice, we are compelled to say its foundation is purely infidel, and that its power over men is only for evil, and that continually.

Having shown that Universalism teaches for doctrines the commandments of men, let us now glance at the vanity of Universalist worship. "In vain they do worship me," &c. I do not assume that God would refuse all worship containing any mixture or degree of error, for I can conceive of no human effort entirely free

from this. I can suppose the Divine Being graciously receiving worship based upon a belief in the cardinal truths of revealed religion, but associated with certain erroneous views, and the prejudices of creed and education; but I cannot conclude, taking the text for my guide, that God can accept any worship based upon a disbelief in the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. There is unbelief in the case of a very grave nature, unbelief which takes away any desire for true worship, and which closes the hand of the bountiful Giver of Good. Universalists and Unitarians cannot sing the praises of Christ or the Holy Spirit, for on their theory that one is a creature and the other an influence, these acts of worship would be idolatry. Neither can they pray through Christ without recognizing the doctrine of saintly intercession or mediation.

Universalist worship is in vain as a means of securing the divine favor. One function of worship, as we understand it, is to confess sin, obtain remission, and be restored to forfeited grace. On the Universalist theory, man never lost the favor of his Maker, no matter how great his sins. God never was, never can be, angry with the wicked. He loves them—there is nothing in his nature but love. The most abandoned transgressor may conclude there is no wrath entertained against him; he may go on adding sin to sin, and cry out, "God is love!" An objector might say, "Every sin will have its punishment in this life; the greater the sin the severer the discipline." But is it so? It is a fact that little innocent children suffer; for what are they punished? It is just as much a fact that very wicked people escape punishment. They thrive upon iniquity, and die in the enjoyment of every temporal good. There being no retribution beyond this world, how are they chastised? This whole idea of unmixed favor is a premium upon sin. Men may sin because it is safe.

Universalist worship is in vain because of its irrationality. "I am a Universalist," said an individual, boastingly, "and you Orthodox are not fair in saying our system is inconsistent with reason." "But I will prove the irrationality of your system," said his friend. "You believe that Jesus Christ died to save all men?" "Yes, I do." "And you don't believe there is a hell?" "No, I do not." "You do not believe there is any punishment hereafter?" "No; men are punished for their sins in this life." "Well, now, let us put your rational system together. It amounts to just this, that Christ died to save all men from nothing at all. Not from hell, because there is no hell; not from punishment hereafter, there is no such thing; not from chastisement here, for you say it must be inflicted for sin. Yours is the absurd spectacle of ropes and life-preservers thrown at an immense expense to a person on dry land, and in no danger of being drowned." This illustration puts Universalism before the world in its broad unreasonableness. The system and its worship are one, and are together an appeal to human weakness and credulity.

Universalist worship is in vain as a means of promoting personal salvation; for, on their theory, it is assured, all are to be saved, none can be lost. Universalists argue man cannot interfere with the purposes of God; they must be accomplished. Then why build churches, send out Universalist preachers, publish books, circulate tracts, and do a thousand other things to promote an object already secured? It is useless to say God commands and we must obey. This is only a Universalist method of getting out of a difficulty, and laying it upon the Almighty. On the Universalist supposition, the command is an absurdity, as if human agency could improve the circumstances of a race God had pronounced sure of heaven! On the possibility of men perishing, such a command is coherent and worthy of its author.

Universalist worship can never be true worship. It must as suggested by the system of doctrine, deal largely in the visionary. Christ said, "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." Ignoring his deity—the part of his nature that gave the statement any significance—they cannot come to the Father. To be true worshippers we need fully to believe the doctrines of the Bible. I have

shown how far our misguided opponents are from this. Over the door of every Universalist place of worship might be written, "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

What is our duty in the light of these disclosures as to what Universalism really is? Am I addressing any who think it a convenient religion? Ah! it appeals to depraved human nature. It removes all wholesome fear of the future consequences of sin. It takes away every spur to holy devotion and sustained self-denial. Allow me solemnly to warn you. Beware of becoming entangled in the meshes of this ensnaring and ruinous system. I warn you against Universalist literature; it will poison your very soul, cast you adrift upon the sea of unbelief. Adhere to the old faith, that in which your fathers lived and died. It will safely guide you through life and home to God. A Universalist preacher once preached in a Quaker neighborhood in Ohio. He had the undivided attention of his audience while he endeavored to show that there was no such a being as the devil, no hell as a place of future punishment, that all sin was punished in this life, that there will be no day of judgment, and that all will go to heaven when they die. He thought he had made a fine impression, and asked if he might preach there again. An old Quaker arose and said: "Friend, if thou hast taught us the truth, we don't need thee any more; and if thou hast taught us a lie, we don't want thee any more." This is the case in a nutshell. If Universalism be true, we don't need it; if it be a lie, we don't want it.



Sermon VI.

RESTORATIONISM.

"But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost."—(Job 11 : 20.)

These are the words of Zophar, the Naamathite, and form part of his address to Job. Zophar describes the state of the man who puts away iniquity from his heart, who refuses to let wickedness dwell in his tabernacles. After declaring the purity, steadfastness, courage, safety and honour of such an individual, he looks at the case of men of opposite character in the language of the text. This passage of Scripture has one feature which specially recommends it to us—its freedom from ambiguity. It is not metaphorical; it contains nothing to lead to a difference of opinion as to its meaning; it is solemnly, awfully literal. Before going further, it might be well to give a brief exposition of these words. The term "wicked" needs no explanation, it is its own interpreter. The wicked are regarded as exposed to punishment for sin; the affirmations of the text show the utter hopelessness of their situation. "But the eyes of the wicked shall fail." Says Dr. A. Clark: "They shall be continually looking for help and deliverance; but their expectation shall be cut off." We read further, "And they shall not escape;" or, as in the margin, "Flight shall perish from them." Again, "And their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost;" literally, their hope shall expire. As the giving up of the ghost is death to the body, so the extinction of hope is death, spiritual and eternal, to the soul. These tremendous words cannot be predicted exclusively of this world. While the wicked are here, there is hope; it may be dimmed with the gloom of coming judgment, it may be a feeble, flickering thing, but it lives for the vilest of the vile. Only in regard to a future state, can it be said of the wicked, "Their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost."

The text will apply to the subject before us—Restorationism. It will form a foundation for our discussion, and will, with other scriptures, show how groundless is the theory. Restorationists believe in a hell, or place of future chastisement. As Rev. William Arthur shows, in his reply to Canon Farrar, their conception of hell is partly pagan and partly nondescript. Mr. Arthur says: "Canon Farrar enthusiastically preaches a place, or state, after death, of discipline, somewhat penal, perhaps, but essentially purifying, whence all who are under the discipline repent and pass to heaven." He also says: "This Purgatory, as far as we can make out, is substantially Greek, much resembling that taught by Plato in the Georgias and the Phædo." In his sermon on "Eternal Punishment," Canon Farrar speaks of those who, if they "should continue in sin, may have to be purified in that gehenna of *aiônios* fire beyond the grave." Says Rev. A. Jukes: "No divine change can be wrought, even in God's elect, save by passing through waters and through fires, * * * waters and fires as real, though not of this world, as those which burned on the altars of old, or moved in the laver of the tabernacle."—(Restitution of all Things, p. 80.) Again, speaking of the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire, he says: "Those not so baptized here, must know the last judgment and the lake of fire, which is the second death."—(p. 86.) Says Rev. J. Baldwin Brown: "I see before me a great vision of pain; the suffering of free spirits is not ended here. * * * This universe is the theatre of boundless and endless ministries of mercy working through pain to blessed issues. * * * Christ will never

cease from seeking the lost while one knee remains stubborn before the name of Jesus, and one heart is unmastered by his love."—(Annihilation and the Gospel of Love, pp. 44–46.) Farrar, Jukes and Brown may be regarded as leading men of the Restorationist school. The quotations given from their writings express the opinions of a number of men of lesser note, who sustain to these the relation of a pupil to the master. It is clear Restorationists believe in a place of suffering beyond this world for those who fail to accept salvation here; that, in the course of "the ages," as they put it, all mankind will be restored to God's favor and heaven. It will be observed that Restorationism reaches the same goal as Universalism, but by a different road and a longer journey. Restorationists disclaim being Universalists, notably Canon Farrar and Mr. Brown, stating they cannot accept the doctrines of that system. We accept their disclaimer; but must regard them as holding out a false hope to the world.

The theory of final restoration proceeds upon the assumption that man's probation does not end with the present life, but extends into the future world. Mr. Jukes asks: "Is God's will to save all men limited to fourscore years, or changed by that event which we call death?" He does not say positively it is not, but assumes as much, and pursues his argument as if he had settled the question. Dr. Farrar, speaking of men who think with him, says, "they will declare their trust that even after death, through the infinite mercy of the loving Father, the dead shall be alive again, and multitudes, at any rate, of the lost be found." Mr. Brown makes similar declarations. We certainly have a right to expect that when men advance so momentous a doctrine as the extension of human probation to the world to come, some convincing portions of Scripture would be given as a warrant in the case. But what are the facts? They may pretend to base their theory upon Scripture; but it is more a matter of reasoning from the great truth "God is love." Not a passage is brought forward that clearly teaches anything of the kind; and when we state this we are told the Scriptures say nothing to the contrary. Instead of something affirmative, our opponents deal in negatives, declaring what this and that text cannot mean. Dr. Farrar is all passion and rhetoric, full of scorn and anathema for those who dare believe in the old theology. Dr. Littledale, speaking of the Canon's sermons, says: "They seldom rise to the dignity of sustained argument, or even of accurate thought, and never attain to the level of matured theological knowledge. * * They are declamatory appeals to a jury, rather than reasoned pleadings before a judge." This is the opinion of a brother clergyman, an able scholar and critic. Mr. Jukes deals in the mystic. He makes the discovery that the flesh of Christ illustrates the nature of Scripture; that each jot of the law of Moses "covers some blessed mystery." He fills up page after page with fanciful analogies, whose chief merit appears to be that they are ingenious speculations; and their demerit that they fail as arguments to prove his theory. It is possible for a man of inventive skill to draw mystic parallels between almost any two things. One may admire the prettiness of such attempts, but as arguments they have nothing to recommend them. Speculation is not proof, it is only play upon words. When it is convenient, Mr. Jukes "coins a word to show what is the term used in the original."—(p. 64) On page 65 he attempts to tone down God's eternity to make the same Greek word used to explain that attribute fit his conception of the "ages." For the same purpose he says "eternal life is not, as so many think, the living on and on for ever and ever. It is rather, as our Lord defines it, a life, the distinctive peculiarity of which is that it has to do with a Saviour, and so is part of a remedial plan."—(p. 66) Such are the fantastic shifts to which men are driven, to fit the pieces of a system together—coining words, shortening God's duration, and the life of the saved. Mr. Jukes knew the Greek adjective was in his way; but he is equal to the emergency; he speculates a little, and the difficulty vanishes.

Is there any foundation for the idea that human probation extends beyond this world? We say no; the Scriptures teach just the opposite. "Because I

have called and ye refused ; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded ; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof ; I also will laugh at your calamity ; I will mock when your fear cometh ; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind ; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer ; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.”—(Prov. 1:24-28.) In this passage we have three ideas—present opportunities, their rejection, and future judgment without remedy. The objection to this application of these words is that they are words of “Wisdom,” and not of God. Is it pretended that Wisdom utters this language as an abstract principle ? The context shows that Wisdom here can only mean God. “Turn you at my reproof ; behold I will pour out my spirit unto you, &c.” Fancy an abstract principle pouring out its spirit ! The quotation shows that the efforts of lost sinners to seek God are in vain, and the reason assigned is. “For they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord.” Again we read, “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might ; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest.”—(Eccles. 9:10) This text clearly teaches that human probation begins and ends with this life. We are to do our work now, for when we come to the grave, when life ends, there is no work by which we can profit, no device by which we can escape punishment, no knowledge of any means of help, &c.—(See Clarke’s Commentary.) Again, “Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near.”—(Isaiah 55:6.) This exhortation is based upon the idea that there is a period coming when God will not be found if sought, when if called he will not hear. It takes its great force from this underlying thought. During this life He may be found, He is near ; the converse follows. Again, “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.”—(Jer. 8 : 20.) It may be objected that this text applies to the Jews. It does primarily ; but who will limit its application ? With the Jews the day of privilege had passed, judgment had come, and there was no hope, hence the lamentation. Life is our summer, our harvest ; death ends both at once and forever. Again “And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came ; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. Afterwards came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you I know you not.”—(Matt. 25:10-12.) This Scripture, and that found in Luke 13:24-27, seems specially designed to cut off all such hope as that entertained by Restorationists. The judgment day is represented by the coming of the bridegroom, and the rising up of the master of the house. In both instances the door is shut, persons are without crying, “Lord, Lord, open to us,” and they receive the same answer, “I know you not.” Christ simply teaches that probation in this life being ended, lost souls will seek mercy, but will not find it. Again, “Behold, now (the time of human life) is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation.”—(2 Cor. 6:2.) These words imply that the future world will offer no day of salvation. Again, “What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul ? Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him ?”—(Job 27:8.) These questions amount to a strong affirmation that there is no hope for the hypocrite in the case mentioned. Again, “And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed ; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence.”—(Luke 16:26.) Here the Saviour teaches that the gulf between heaven and hell is impassable ; if so, there can be no restoration of lost souls. Again, “When a wicked man dieth his expectation shall perish ; and the hope of unjust men perisheth.”—(Prov. 11:7.) This text speaks for itself. Lastly, we read, “He that is unjust let him be unjust still ; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still ; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still, and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold I come quick-

ly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."—(Rev. 22:11–12.) Here we are taught that when Christ comes to judgment the moral state of the righteous and wicked will be unalterable. The language is governed by the imperative mood, and is, in fact, a command that it shall be so. The foregoing Scriptures make clear the fact that human probation is confined to the present life; that the future world offers no hope to those who die in sin; and that the theory of Restorationists is a cunningly devised fable. Not only is this theory unscriptural, it is also unreasonable. As one writer truly remarks, "a future probation would go far to neutralize the present one." We cannot suppose the God of wisdom arranging anything so defective, which would lead men to say, "This opportunity may pass, there is another beyond." Scripture and reason say, "Now is the day of salvation."

The restoration theory is also based upon the assumption that pain or suffering in hell will lead the lost to repentance and reformation. Mr. Jukes with characteristic ingenuity tries to gather support for this idea from the case of the fornicator mentioned in 1 Cor. 5:3–5. The Corinthians were directed "to deliver such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." Mr. Jukes concludes that as an apostle delivered persons to Satan in this world for their moral improvement (see 1 Tim. 1:20), God might hand over souls to Satan in hell with the same object in view. We can prove anything by this kind of logic—taking a fact and guessing at a possibility. We might with as much reason say Paul had a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet him; therefore God may place in the glorified bodies of the saints some ache or pain to act as a means of disciplinary elevation in the orders of sainthood. There is a piece of logic! Surely the shade of Whately will appear in recognition of such an advance in a science of which, in his day, he was a master! The case of the incestuous man was one of church discipline, and pertained chiefly to this life as such. Then the fact that he was delivered to Satan in this world (what this implies no one knows, not even Mr. Jukes) supposes the possible eternal loss of his soul in the world to come, if not so delivered. The act only has a benevolent aspect as viewed from this standpoint. On Mr. Jukes' theory he might have been spared the infliction, and left to the general restoration. This man's case pleads strongly for this life as our only probation, and offers no support to Mr. Jukes' idea of *post mortem* purification. Says Rev. Marshall Randles, "The influences surrounding a fallen spirit are not such as to purify, much less to deliver from guilt. Chastisement on earth often promotes religion, because accompanied by the effectual grace of God. But mere pain has no intrinsic property or tendency to produce virtue or religion."—(For Ever p. 311.) The notion that suffering leads men to repentance and to God is unscriptural. Isaiah asks, "Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more."—(Isaiah 1:5.) Jeremiah cries, "Thou hast stricken them but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them but they have refused to receive correction; they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return."—(Jer. 5:3.) God says, "I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, yet have ye not returned unto Me, saith the Lord."—(Amos 4:6.) Turn to the 16th chapter of Revelation. This chapter speaks of the pouring out of God's wrath, and shows that actual judgment does not lead men to repentance. "And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which had power over these plagues, and they repented not to give him glory."—(Verse 9.) In the eleventh verse it is said "Men blasphemed the God of Heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds;" and the twenty-first verse makes a similar statement. It is a matter of almost every day observation that suffering of itself does not lead men to amend their lives. They are stricken down in their sins, and, as Mr. Jukes would say, "pass through fires and through waters," they recover, and are as great sinners as before. Yet, in the face of analogical reasoning, and the testimony of Scripture, we are told hell fire will purify the impure.

Some of the more orthodox Restorationists say the atoning work and mediation of Christ will be available to suffering souls; that these, with corrective pain, will accomplish the work of restoration. The whole force of Scriptural declaration, in this connection, is to the effect that the atonement of Jesus, as a saving agency, is only available to men in this world; and while this is the fact Scripture is entirely silent as to any such application of the redemptive plan as that supposed by Restorationists. We have absolutely no data for any such supposition. It is, therefore, great folly to draw conclusions from human fancy on a matter of such great importance.

The punishment of hell is nowhere in Scripture represented as remedial, but penal. It is "judgment without mercy, everlasting destruction, judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries; the wrath of God, everlasting punishment, eternal fire." As one says, "The lake of fire will no more have a sanctifying virtue than James' metaphorical fire—that world of iniquity which sets on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of hell."—(James 3:6.) If the tongue, set on fire of gehenna, "defile the whole body," gehenna itself cannot be purifying.

If it were possible for souls to be saved by the ministration of pain in hell, their song in Heaven would not be the song of the redeemed as given in Scripture. We are told the saved cry "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood," &c. Souls saved by the restorationist process could not sing that song. They would have to cry "Unto the pains of hell that purified us, and made us meet for Heaven; to them be ascribed corrective power, and honor everlasting." And then why may not Satan come in for a share of the praise? If Restorationism be true, he has a part to perform in the work. The truth is, hell is no half-way house to Heaven. Itself and its inhabitants do not help, but oppose, the salvation of souls. The blood of Christ, not pain, is the source of human purity and blessedness.

Restorationism gains nothing from an examination of certain Scriptures that are pressed into its service. Much is attempted to be made out of the parable of the king reckoning with his servants, found in the 18th chapter of Matthew. One servant owed 10,000 talents, and, because of his merciless treatment of a fellow servant, was delivered to "the tormentors till he should pay all that was due." It is argued that the lost are delivered to the torment of hell till they shall pay all that justice demands, and, therefore, a restoration is implied. The parable is totally against the theory. This servant owed 10,000 talents, about \$9,000,000, and, inasmuch as "he had naught to pay," his punishment could be nothing short of life-long or perpetual imprisonment. Eternity would not help a man to pay \$9,000,000 with nothing. If this parable advance anything on this subject, it teaches eternal punishment. Our Lord's direction to agree with an adversary, and his statement that, in case of disagreement, the uttermost farthing should be exacted in prison (Matt. 5:25-26) is a piece of advice for the guidance of persons engaged in law suits. The context shows that Christ's observations are entirely literal, and excludes all spiritual application. Another text given a restorationist twist is that found in 1 Cor. 3:13-15. As the context declares, the Apostle is speaking of ministers and their work. He says, "we are laborers together with God." Speaking of the foundation, Jesus Christ, he says, "everything that ministers may build upon that foundation shall be tried as by fire, or duly tested in the day of judgment, called 'the day.' Any minister building rightly shall be rewarded; any minister building wrongly shall suffer loss (his reward shall not be so great), but he shall be saved, yet narrowly and barely, as if by fire." The passage has not the remotest reference to suffering in hell. There is another text about preaching to the spirits in prison. This, also, is wide of the mark. I shall not examine it here; I leave its consideration to a discourse for that purpose. The theory we are noticing has no countenance in the word of God. Such statements as "His mercy is everlasting; his mercy en-

dureth forever," are true as applied to the saved. It is also said "Thy judgments are a great deep;" of the wicked, "I will feed them with judgment;" and Paul speaks of "eternal judgment" as a doctrine of Christ.

The restoration theory is very indefinite as to the time or period of the supposed deliverance. Using this world's terms, it may be a hundred, a thousand, or a million years before the purifying fire does its work. Mr. Jukes likes to use the phrase "ages of ages." Restorationism does not offer a very pleasing future to the wicked; it supposes the spending of a little eternity in suffering, if not an entire one. Now all the thunder of Canon Farrar, and the polished sophistry of Mr. Jukes, will tell strongly against this little eternity of sorrow. We ask Canon Farrar, why does the loving Father allow his creatures to suffer so long? Is this delay an evidence of his great love? We ask Mr. Jukes why the "first-born" cannot more speedily save the "later-born?" Is this delay any proof of the love of the former toward the latter? If God cannot permit his creatures to perish for ever, he cannot permit them to suffer "ages of ages;" the love that saves from the one will save from the other. The Universalist and Restorationist argument from God's love proves too much; it falsifies history and experience. Restorationist indefiniteness is painful, it gives us conjecture for fact, a stone for bread.

The terms used by Restorationists are vague and contradictory. Canon Farrar has titled his philippic against eternal punishment, "Eternal Hope." The eloquent Canon could scarcely have been more unfortunate in selecting a name for his book. What is eternal hope? To hope eternally is never to realise; it is "hope deferred which maketh the heart sick." The expression "eternal hope," as applied to the lost, presents anything but a hopeful outlook; if they are to hope forever for deliverance they will simply suffer eternal punishment. It would seem as if Dr. Farrar had unwittingly given in the title of his volume some support to the doctrine he has so vehemently set himself to destroy. This confusion of terms appears in other writers. Mr. Jukes speaks of a divine change being effected in men "through waters and through fires," (p. 80.) and on the next page says, "In and through Christ we receive this transmutation," and much more to the same effect. The truth is, Restorationism is not a doctrine of revealed religion, and men cannot describe it in the language of inspiration, remarkable for its coherency and force; they must use a human vocabulary, thus giving proof of its earthly origin.

Says Dr. Salmon, "If Christ revealed any doctrine of universal restitution, he did it so indistinctly that his followers failed to apprehend it. From the earliest times, the popular and prevalent view among them was that which may be described as the popular view with Christians still. The doctrine of universal restitution, if ever taught at all, was but the private idea of speculative men, struggling for a bare toleration, and ultimately struggling in vain."—(Reply to Canon Farrar.) This witness is true. We reject this theory on the ground of its novelty, and because it tends to change radically the motives to embrace religion, and lead a godly life. Novelty in religion is the worst species of the genus, and should at all times be viewed with suspicion. The hope of the world is Christ. Our danger can only be accurately measured by the sacrifice he made to redeem us. Let Christ, and him alone, be the basis of our future expectations. Casting aside ornately-dressed human speculations, and taking the Bible for our guide, let us travel on to the future.



Sermon VII.

THE SPIRITS IN PRISON.

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached to the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."—(1 Peter 3:18-20.)

There is an article in the Apostles' Creed concerning Christ's descent into hell. Bishop Pearson in his "Exposition of the Creed," says, "the descent into hell was not in the ancient creeds or rules of faith."—(p. 340.) He further observes, "The first place we find it used was in the Church of Aquileia; and the time we are sure it was used in the creed of that Church was less than 400 years after Christ."—(p. 341.) It is more than marvelous that if our Lord's descent into hell be a part of the true Christian faith, such a doctrine found no place in any formula or confession of belief for some 400 years after Christ. That it then took shape is strongly suggestive of human additions to the faith of the apostles. There is but one text of Scripture which gives any support to the idea of our Saviour's descent into hell. In his sermon on the day of Pentecost, Peter said of Jesus, "For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand that I should not be moved; therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption."—(Acts 2:25-27.) This is Bishop Pearson's sole foundation for the expression in the creed, "He descended into hell." In his note on the original passage in the 16th Psalm, Dr. A. Clark says, "As to leaving the soul in hell, it can only mean permitting the life of the Messiah to continue under the power of death; for *sheol*, the word translated hell, signifies a pit, a ditch, the grave, or state of the dead." The word used by Peter and translated hell, is *hades*, and means, as has been observed in other places, the unseen world or place of separate spirits. Peter simply asserts in his explanation of the words of David that Christ's soul did not remain in the region of separate spirits; he makes no allusion to *gehenna*, the place of torment, and therefore the statement in the creed, as expounded by Bishop Pearson, and as commonly understood, is unfounded. Bishop Pearson readily admits that the passage concerning preaching to the spirits in prison has no reference to the descent into hell, and to this we may add the opinion of Calmet, a learned and pious Roman Catholic commentator, Archbishop Leighton, St. Augustine, and others.

Our text is regarded as the corner stone of Restorationism. Chief among the builders upon this foundation is that master of the mystic and lover of the fanciful, Rev. Andrew Jukes. In "Restitution of all Things," page 39, Mr. Jukes asks, "To whom shall the Church be priests after death? Shall it be to the great mass of our fellow-men who have departed hence in ignorance? Shall it be to the spirits in prison, such as those to whom, after his death, Christ himself once preached?" In a foot-note our author says of the words of the text, "They distinctly assert that our Lord went and preached to the spirits in prison, who once had been disobedient in the days of Noah." Our task in the present discourse is to rescue these words from the misrepresentations of Mr. Jukes and his friends, and, while giving their true meaning, to show that Restorationism here, as elsewhere, is discountenanced.

The first statement in the text is, that our Lord Jesus Christ was a vicarious sacrifice for human sin. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust," &c. He suffered for sins, not his own, for he was holy, undefiled, separate from sinners; he suffered for the sins of others. He, as "the just," suffered for "the unjust." Here the substitutional idea is strongly brought out. Taking the notion that Jesus suffered as a martyr to the truth, sealing his testimony with his blood, it cannot be said that He in any sense suffered for the unjust. He might have suffered *from* them, or *by* them, but not for them. It was human guiltiness that brought suffering on Christ. Sin as an evil must have its appropriate punishment; this is an everlasting law, the demands of which cannot be ignored. When the Father gave His only begotten Son there could be no exception; He stood in the place of sinners, bore the wrath due to their transgressions. Christ not only suffered to meet the demands of eternal justice, He was put to death in the flesh "to bring us to God." While we have, in the satisfaction rendered to divine law, the legal aspect, we have, in the design to bring men to God, the benevolent side of our Saviour's death. The enjoyment of God is man's chief good. The Creator has placed the worlds in their orbits, given to the great natural forces their missions, so constituted the lower creatures that they are happy in the positions assigned, aiming at nothing beyond. Man's excellency is seen in his moral and spiritual capabilities; he can commune with God, and, because capable of this, is really unsatisfied without it. He may try to satisfy his soul with the things of earth, its wealth, honor, pleasure, but his heart misgives. It may be safely said man never finds the degree of contentment he seeks, and expects to find, in the world; and the reason is obvious, the world has not that measure, it can be found only in God. Naturally, we are far off from God; it is this fact that makes the death of Christ of such consequence, it brings us to God. Is it wonderful that the redeemed in heaven sing of this death? That it is the boast of the saved on earth? Surely not. To be brought to God, is to be emancipated, to receive life, relationship, fellowship; it is salvation from sin and hell, from all evil, and for ever.

The Holy Spirit performed an important part in the work of redemption. He not only overshadowed the virgin, providing a body for the Incarnate Word, it was through the Eternal Spirit Christ "offered himself without spot to God;" and on the morning of the resurrection, his body was "quickened" by this same Spirit. The Spirit that infused life into the dead body of the world's deliverer, inspires life into our dead souls. The Father appoints, the Son procures, the Holy Spirit imparts; thus, the deliverance and elevation of a human soul call forth the thought and activity of the ever-blessed God—Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

The second statement in the text is, that Christ, by the Holy Spirit, went and preached to the spirits in prison. The relative pronoun "which," has direct reference to the word "Spirit" going before. Says Peter, "Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, by *which* also he went and preached." Nothing is here said about the Saviour going personally upon any such mission as that imagined by Restorationists; the work done was accomplished by the Holy Spirit. A very clear distinction is drawn in Scripture between our Lord and the third person in the Trinity. Before His crucifixion, Jesus said to His disciples, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me."—(John 15: 26.) Here Christ promised to send the Spirit. No one could understand him to mean he would come in person; he would comfort—instruct—them by the Spirit. The assertion of the text is, that he preached, not personally, but by the Holy Ghost; and yet Mr. Jukes has the temerity to say, "Our Lord went and preached to the spirits in prison!" Surely, in his zeal

for his new faith, our author forgot the relations of words, and the proprieties of the case. In the sense of the text, the Saviour preaches to-day wherever the Gospel is proclaimed.

When did this preaching take place? It is most unfortunate for the theory of restoration, that the reference to Noah, and to the building of the ark, follows so closely upon that to the spirits in prison. If this damaging allusion were not here, a somewhat pretentious theory, perhaps, might be built up. As it is, any such attempt can only lead, like the building of the tower of Babel, to a confusion of tongues. Our theorizers have a fondness for cutting a text loose from its context, when the context is awkwardly in the way. By such a method, an exegesis becomes wonderfully convincing; the countenances of believers in the new gospel are radiant; their hearts swell with emotion; in prophetic vision, they see the nations walking in the new light, filled with a universal charity; when suddenly, some old-fashioned exegetist challenges the premises, couples the severed links of some continuous passage, and there is a collapse.

Mr. Jukes quotes Dean Alford's comment on the text as follows:—"I understand these words to say that our Lord, in his disembodied state, did go to the place of detention of departed spirits, and did there announce his work of redemption, preach salvation, in fact, to the disembodied spirits of those who refused to obey the voice of God, when the judgment of the flood was hanging over them."—(p. 40.) Were there no others in hell at this time but the spirits of those whom the judgment of the flood took away? According to the common chronology the flood took place 2,349 years before Christ. Where were the inhabitants of the cities of the plain, said by St. Jude to be "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire?" Where were Pharaoh and the Egyptian host? Korah, Dathan, Abiram and their followers? the Cannanitish nations? and other nations whose idolatrous worship was full of unmentionable abominations? Were none of these there? This restorationist notion of Jesus preaching to the spirits of those drowned by the deluge, leads to one of two extraordinary conclusions: either there were no lost souls in hell but themselves—none had gone before them to that place for some 1,600 years, for some 2,300 years after hell had not opened its gates to receive a single sinner—or our Lord passed by all, in his mission of mercy, but those who died by the flood! Mr. Jukes, Dean Alford, and all who adopt their views, impale themselves upon the horns of this dilemma. The former conclusion makes falsehood of the Scriptures, the latter represents the Saviour of men as a merciless partialist, going among nations of the lost, and selecting some as the objects of his compassion, leaving others to suffer. No man of reason can accept either alternative. The restorationist view of this text cannot be sustained. Lacking any cohesive element it falls to pieces; as a phantom, or the mirage of the desert, it dissolves, and, "like the baseless fabric of a vision, leaves not a wreck behind."

The preaching by the Holy Spirit, referred to in the text, took place in the days of Noah, this preacher of righteousness being the visible agent. It is said of the spirits in prison that they "sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing." The plain teaching of St. Peter, is that Christ, by the Holy Spirit, preached to the spirits *now* in prison in the days of Noah. That the Holy Spirit operated upon the minds of men at that early period is historically true. If you turn to the sixth chapter of Genesis you read, "And the Lord said, my spirit shall not always strive with man. * * * And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have created from the face of the earth."—(Verses 3-7.) Several points here demand notice:

1. "The long-suffering of God." This lasted 120 years, during which time the building of the ark proceeded. God might have made a full end at once, but he preferred to delay the coming stroke. God's forbearance with the antediluvians displays his character. He never allows justice to lay bare her arm until mercy has been offered in vain. How men test the long-suffering of God to-day! It is possible to test it too long, to presume upon divine mercy until we are swept away. Let us avoid tempting God.

2. The spirits now in prison had an opportunity of salvation by the ministry of Noah, and the Holy Spirit, while the long-suffering of God waited. In the matter of warning they had line upon line. Not only had God declared what he would do, he emphasised his words by ordering preparations to be made to save the repentant. As the Holy Spirit strove and Noah preached; as the ark reared its massive proportions, its shape indicating that it was to float upon the waters; as year after year of the one hundred and twenty passed away shortening their time and lessening their chances; they could not but acknowledge the impressiveness and fullness of their privileges. Not a sinner sank beneath the tempestuous waters of the deluge but was called, and might have been saved. All the perishing may be saved to-day. We have the same Spirit striving with us, we have the gospel and men to proclaim it. If we go to prison it will be more tolerable for the antediluvians than for us.

3. The spirits now in prison were stubbornly disobedient in the days of Noah; their disobedience was the cause of their death and subsequent imprisonment.

The general idea of the text is Christ's perpetual influence in his Church. Says the learned Archbishop Leighton: "There is nothing that so much concerns a Christian to know as the excellency of Jesus Christ, his person and work; so that it is always pertinent to insist much on that subject. The apostle, having spoken of this Spirit, or Divine Nature, and the power of it, as raising him (Christ) from the dead, takes occasion to speak of another work of that Spirit, to wit, the emission and publishing of his divine doctrine; and that not a new thing, following his death and rising, but as the same in substance with that which was, by the same spirit, promulgated long before, even to the first inhabitants of the world.—(Commentary, p. 265.) This is a very clear putting of the case. True religion is one and the same in all ages, and is sustained and propagated by the same almighty power. Peter recognized this, and reasoned accordingly.

It may be objected to this exposition that the word "spirits" must mean disembodied spirits, and therefore the preaching was to such, instead of men in the flesh as in the case of the antediluvians. As Dr. A. Clarke points out, in his comment on the text, this does not follow. In Scripture, "spirits" are spoken of when embodied, living men are meant; a part is put for the whole. God is addressed by Moses and Aaron as "the God of the spirits of all flesh."—(Numbers, 16:22.) Again, Moses says: "Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation."—(Numbers, 27:16.) Now, those servants of God did not mean that God was not the God of the bodies of men in the sense of being their creator and preserver: their form of speech was elliptical. Job speaks of God as the being "In whose hand is the soul of every living thing."—(Job 12:10) Taking the word soul to mean life, or otherwise, Job evidently means the whole being. When Paul asks, "Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live?"—(Heb. 12:9) he certainly includes men in the flesh in the term spirits. From these examples we see it is not uncommon to use the word spirits when men in the flesh are referred to, and this breaks the force of the objection. Then it will be seen that when St. Peter wrote the condition of disembodied spirits was their *then* condition, he spoke of them as they then were, and referred to certain advantages offered as they had been. It would be quite within the limits of coherency and truth for a minister

to say, in regard to some ungodly attendants upon his ministry who had died without hope, that he had preached to spirits in prison. No one would suppose he had descended into hell; but that the Gospel was proclaimed in this world, and in the days of their life. This will illustrate St. Peter's style of language, and show the limits within which the text is capable of a true scriptural interpretation.

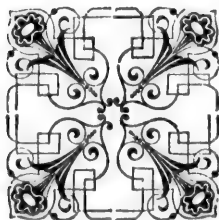
It will be gathered from what has been advanced that the theory of Restorationism receives no support from the text. Peter's theme is a certain offer of salvation to the living, not to the lost. We argue the folly of this conception from the entire silence of Scripture on the subject. It is true Rev. A. Jukes tries to gather proof for his favorite idea, but it is manufactured, and even then decidedly shadowy and frail. After discoursing on the ceremonial law, particularly that feature of it called the law of redemption, and making points from "the lamb redeeming the ass," the "purification of women on the birth of a male or a female child"—(p. 40-52), in which circumstances Mr. Jukes sees the coming glory of restitution, he says, "The prophets repeat the same teaching, still further opening out this part of God's purpose, in a later age to visit those who were rejected in an earlier one."—(p. 54.) On examination of the teachings of the prophets, as indicated by Mr. Jukes' references, we find them to consist of certain involved and highly figurative predictions regarding Moab (Jer. 48:47); Egypt and Assyria (Isaiah 19:23-25); Elam (Jer. 49:39); and Sodom and her daughters (Ezek. 16:53-55);—language, as James Anthony Froude would say, that bears about the same relation to final restitution, that "color does to sound, or longitude to the rule of three." Mr. Jukes takes for granted what he ought to prove, viz.: that those prophecies refer to a restoration in a future state. An unbiassed study of the passages can only result in the conviction that they describe certain national changes in this world, of those nations when they were nations, or of others who may be indicated by their names. Does Mr. Jukes suppose that Moab, Egypt and Assyria, Elam, &c., will exist as distinct nations in the future state? This would be necessary for the predictions to be fulfilled in their restoration. Then "Sodom and her daughters" are to return to "their former estate." What was their former estate? A state of vile, unmentionable sin, that could not be tolerated; a state of judgment by fire and brimstone from Heaven. Taking the prophecy as it reads, then Sodom and her daughters are to return to their former estate of sin, followed by judgment! This is unfortunate for Mr. Jukes. It is marvelous that so acute a thinker did not see where he was planting his foot. Admitting, for argument's sake, the correctness of Mr. Jukes' idea of those prophecies, they do not prove enough for his theory. Granted, the lost of Moab, Egypt and Assyria, Elam, Sodom and her daughters, are restored, what becomes of the lost of the rest of the nations of mankind? Mr. Jukes' pet notion is a universal restoration; his argument from the prophets is against himself. Our friend is not more successful in his appeals to the New Testament than in those to the Law and the Prophets. His oriental imagination never leaves him. As he leaps from one dispensation to another, the glamour of his theme is more and more enchanting and deceptive. In the company of Christ and his apostles, he can find no proof for final restitution. There is much fine writing, but most of it is in the interrogative form, a specious, non-committal method of pressing a case, and a confession of weakness in the matter of dogmatic proof. If the salvation of the lost through successive ages were the purpose of God, it would be fully revealed. So great a subject as the restoration of every fallen, suffering child of Adam, and possibly of the devil and his angels, as Mr. Jukes intimates, would be declared in the plainest language, that all might understand. The actual situation is the opposite of this. The dispassionate mind can only draw one conclusion; God entertains no such purpose of universal restoration, and, therefore, makes no revelation in the case.

The deluge was the greatest judgment the world ever passed through ; it is to be followed by a greater one. When Christ, the judge of quick and dead, shall come in the glory of His Father, when all nations are gathered before him, the books are opened, and men are rewarded according to their works, then shall there be such a time of tribulation as will shadow every previous display of the kind. We sustain a relation to the coming period somewhat analogous to that of the antediluvians to the judgment of the flood. We are apprised of its coming, and warned to prepare. The Gospel is preached, the Holy Spirit strives, Christ is held up as the true ark, the Almighty Ruler of all things is longsuffering, what more can we ask ? If we go to the prison of the disobedient, it will be in spite of all this. Am I addressing any who, like the sinners of Noah's time, feel indifferent to all warning, and laugh at Christian concern on their behalf ? Look through the Gospel telescope, see your brethren of the antediluvian period, the view tells you human nature is the same to-day as it was forty centuries ago. They of old trifled and scorned until destruction came without remedy. Allow me, as an honest man, to place the facts before you. Your present course predicates judgment, leads to prison. Turn from sin to Christ. Have your names taken out of God's criminal calendar, have them enrolled with those of the virtuous. This is your day of grace ; improve it, husband your time. Every stroke of the bell

" Is the knell of your departing hours :

Where are they ? With the years beyond the flood."

Too many of those hours have gone to waste, let the past prodigality suffice. You have gone far enough on the down-grade to the prison of the impenitent. Give the signal, " Down brakes !" Switch off on the other track ; it is up-grade, but it leads to the city of God.



Sermon VIII.

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

"Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."—(Matt. 12:31-32.)

This passage of Scripture opens up a momentous question, momentous to us because we are sinful beings, and are the parties concerned. There is so much spoken and written in these days about the salvation of the entire human family, so many are disposed to entertain what is termed the "larger hope," that the possibility of committing an unpardonable sin is scarcely considered; and because of this tendency of modern thought there is reason to search the Scriptures and ascertain their verdict upon a subject so directly bearing upon the prospects of our race. It is no part of a minister's duty to get into a rut; to discourse continually upon certain familiar portions of God's word, of obvious meaning, to the neglect of others whose signification is not so clear. Christ said "Every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."—(Matt. 13:52.) It cannot be said of any Scripture that it is purposeless, much less of any part of the sermons of our Lord. All the utterances of the Great Teacher meet a human want, communicate a knowledge, without which our necessity would be great indeed. I have no sympathy with those who try to soften down, or explain away, a truth of God because it may fall alarmingly upon the ear, or be unsavory to the taste. The fault is not with the truth, but with the ear and the taste. The ear requires to be accustomed to a little artillery fire, and the taste to a process of Christian education. As ministers, our business is to take the word of God as we find it, giving it a common-sense interpretation, and pressing its lessons upon the public mind. The text is remarkable for its plainness; it is one of the least ambiguous of all our Saviour's sayings. At the same time it is an awe-inspiring statement, and the more so from the fact that it comes from the lips of Him "who was wounded for our transgressions," and whose loving heart goes out in longings after a guilty world.

The text directs our attention to the sin of blasphemy. The word in the Greek text is *blasphemia*. Says Webster: "The first syllable, *blas*, stands for *blapsi*, from *blapsis*, damage, injury; the last syllable is *phemi*, I say, I speak." The meaning of the word is damaging or injurious speech. Mr. Webster further observes: "Blasphemy is to attribute to God that which is contrary to his nature and does not belong to Him, and to deny what does. It is an indignity offered to God by words or writing; reproachful, contemptuous or irreverent words uttered impiously against God." Rev. Richard Watson defines it to be "an impious attempt to derogate from the Divine Majesty, and to alienate others from the love and reverence of God." The blasphemer, therefore, is a calumniator or reviler of the Deity. Any word spoken with this tendency, whether literal or figurative, violent or placid, amid frowns, tears or smiles, is blasphemy. Blasphemy under the law of Moses was a crime punishable with death. We have an instance of this in the book of Leviticus, chapter 24:10-16. The enormity of the offence may be judged from the fact that the blasphemer mentioned was almost at once stoned to death by the congregation of Israel, as God commanded Moses. This sin is indictable in England and the United States to-day, but the law is not often enforced. Another case of blasphemy is re-

corded in 1 Kings 18:17-37. Sennacherib, king of Assyria, sent Rabshakeh and a great army against Jerusalem. Rabshakeh blasphemed God in addressing the people on the wall of the city. God brought upon the king and his army swift retribution. An angel of the Lord smote the Assyrian camp by night, and destroyed 185,000 men. The remnant beat a hasty retreat, while Sennacherib was slain by his own sons. Blasphemy is common in our day. Habitual or casual profanation of the name and attributes of God by common swearing is blasphemy. No man of ordinary respectability, no well-bred person, no gentleman, ever swears. The swearer is always of low habits and loose companionship. The words of blasphemy on a man's lips are sufficient indication that he is of very questionable character, and that it is time for hearers of such language to move into another atmosphere. The crime is contagious. A blaspheming father will have a blaspheming son, thus one generation corrupts another. The offence is wide-spread. On steamboats, railway trains, at railway stations, at cab stands, in our streets, we hear the horrid words of blasphemy. The sin shows a desperate state of heart and life.

There are three steps to blasphemy. One is to accustom ourselves to treat the Supreme Being with irreverent familiarity. How often we see this. Men talk of God in a strain of humor and jocularly fearful to hear. There are men to whom nothing is sacred. Death, religion, the future, the God in whose hand their breath is, are all more or less the subjects of their unholy ridicule. Sometimes more is indicated by the eye and the facial expression than words can unfold. Then men are not satisfied with the ordinary language of sarcasm. They coin forms of expression, thus perverting the natural faculty of invention to a purpose worthy of the severest reprobation. A flippant method of speech regarding God and revealed solemnities is the opening of the road leading to fully developed blasphemy.

Another step to blasphemy is to arraign the divine attributes. The free-thinking, infidel class do this. They find fault with God's goodness because evil exists; with His justice because He punishes the rebellious, &c., &c. There is great folly and sin in accusing an infinite being at the bar of our very limited intelligence. The wisest of men are but children in understanding as compared with the wisdom of the omniscient God. The spirit that prompts murmuring, fault-finding, is the spirit of blasphemy.

Another step to blasphemy is to revile God's providence. Men do this when some crushing affliction falls upon them. An individual loses his wife by death, parents lose a beloved child, some accident disables one before remarkable for his activity, a fire destroys valuable property, a business failure brings ruin, and so on through the catalogue of calamities. Instead of being submissive, there are men who curse providence, or what they are pleased to term their ill-fortune. They declare providence is one-sided, unjust, and take up the attitude of stubborn rebellion. Such reviling prepares for any sin; it is as foolish as it is criminal. To speak disparagingly of God's providence, is to speak injuriously of God—providence is God in action.

Such is the sin to which the Saviour makes reference in the text. That it is so prevalent is a blot upon our civilization. We should avoid any step leading to so great a transgression. The blossom of such evil fruit, the bud of so poisonous a flower, the first shoot of such rank and offensive vegetation, should be destroyed. Let us watch our hearts. If our hearts be pure, our tongues will be under good government; we shall be reverent, guarded, submissive.

According to the text, blasphemy against the Father and the Son is pardonable. "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." Why the sin against the Father and the Son should be pardonable, as distinguished from that against the Holy Ghost, we do not know, and have no means of knowing. We believe the persons in the God-head are equal in power, glory, and eternal

duration. It would be reasonable to suppose that what would be unpardonable as an offence against one, would be so in the case of each; but it is not so. The words of Jesus are clear and emphatic. He distinctly states that all sins are pardonable but this one against the Holy Ghost. There is, then, an unpardonable sin. There is a reason why the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost should be unpardonable. All divine procedure is founded upon reason; but the reason in this case is not revealed; it is hidden in the deep counsels of God. It would be rash, presumptuous to speculate upon a matter of such awful moment; and after speculating ever so finely and wisely, we would be no surer that we had the truth than before. Our eagle-feathered imagination may take us round the circumference of the truth, but it would be unlikely to conduct us to its centre. It is more becoming to accept the Saviour's statement as to the fact, leaving the why and wherefore with Him.

It is matter for thankfulness that all sins, even blasphemies, against the Father and the Son are pardonable. There is hope for the desperately wicked. The surroundings of the sinner may be in every sense unfavorable; his moral and intellectual education may be grossly defective; the chains of habit, forged to the strength of welded iron, may bind him; a personal and vindictive devil may drive him whithersoever he listeth; the gloom of the nethermost hell may partially envelope him; but, if he have escaped one terrible transgression, there is hope. So teaches the Lord Jesus Christ; so we preach on His authority.

Let us now look more particularly at the unpardonable sin. If we consider the circumstances under which the words of the text were spoken, we find our Lord had cast out a devil. "There was brought unto Him, one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb; and He healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. But when the Pharisees heard it they said, this fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of devils."—(Matt. 12: 22-24.) The Pharisees here simply stated that Jesus, being in league with the devil, had cured the man by Satanic agency; that the power working in and through Him was diabolical and not divine. Our Lord understood them in this sense; for he immediately proceeded to show the absurdities involved in their conclusion. "And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand; and if Satan cast out Satan" (their supposition) "he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I, by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore, they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is come unto you. * * * Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." Three things here appear very clear:

1. The Pharisees termed the Spirit of God working in Christ the devil. St. Mark says, chap. 3: 28-30, the Saviour uttered the awful words about blasphemy. "Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit," or was possessed with a devil.

2. The statements of the Pharisees were damaging, or injurious language, (see etymology of the word *blasphemia*,) and constituted blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

3. Our Lord addressed the Pharisees in the text as having committed the unpardonable sin. He clearly teaches such to be the fact; only, indeed, upon this ground have His words coherency and application to the occasion. To suppose Christ uttered such awful sentences in regard to a sin that had not been perpetrated, and could not be, is to charge him with folly of thought and speech. Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, the unpardonable sin, according to the Great Teacher, forms one in the long catalogue of human transgressions. The text is a danger signal mercifully placed along our track. May we heed the warning.

Our Lord declared to the Pharisees in clear and forcible language that the sin of which they had been guilty had no forgiveness. His first statement is

absolutely unqualified. He says, "The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." This declaration is limited by no restrictions; it sweeps all duration; it announces a fact; a fact in the present, in the future, and forever. No amount of re-translation, of exegetical jugglery, of cutting and perversion, can rob this utterance of its meaning; its plainness is its defence. The second statement in the text is, "But whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." The first part of this declaration is as entirely unrestricted as the former one. Universalists and Restorationists, ignoring other affirmations, try to gather up some crumbs of comfort for themselves and their systems by a criticism of the expression "neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Rev. A. Jukes translates the Greek to suit himself by saying that instead of reading "shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come" the true rendering is "shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age, nor the coming one." "But," says Mr. Jukes, "the text says nothing of those ages to come." That is, the ages after the coming age. Mr. Jukes entertains the hope that what will not be done in the coming age, may be accomplished in the ages after; in other language, he takes a supposition of his own, and makes it a prop for his theory of final restitution. Accepting, for argument's sake, Mr. Jukes' translation, it does not help him. At the time Christ thus spoke, the Christian dispensation had been introduced, His spiritual kingdom had been set up in the earth. The cry of John the Baptist, the forerunner, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," had been fulfilled, and Christianity was actually in conflict with a virtually defunct Judaism. Mr. Jukes himself being judge, Jesus said the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost was unpardonable in the Christian age, or the future one. This is all we contend for. The age following the Christian is the eternal age; the reference to both ages leaves small hope for universal restitution. It will be seen that, after all Mr. Jukes' learned efforts to mend the translation, he lands just where he started, and leaves the authorized reading really untouched. But, as if to destroy all doubt in the case, our Lord makes use of other language entirely unambiguous. The expression in Luke is "shall not be forgiven.—"(Luke 12:10.) In Mark 3:29, "hath never forgiveness." These collated with the two in the text, one being explanatory of the other, show that our Saviour cut off all hope from the blasphemer against the Holy Ghost.

It is argued by some that the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost cannot be committed in our day. They say the Saviour is not now upon earth working miracles, and that, therefore, men cannot ascribe them to Satanic agency. This looks a good deal like begging the question. Blasphemy, as seen by the etymology of the word, is not limited to one set of phrases, or times, or circumstances. To blaspheme, is to revile God. He that reviles the Holy Ghost perpetrates the unpardonable sin. Then is it true that there are no miracles in our day? There are miracles of grace. Every true conversion is the casting out of a devil. Satan rules the unrenowned man, leads him from sin to sin, fills him with hatred of God and goodness. When a devil is cast out of the human soul by the Spirit of God; when numbers of such cases occur, and men say, as they do sometimes, "It is the work of the devil," how far are they from the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost? It does not become me to dogmatize here, but I cannot help saying that the resemblance between the blaspheming Pharisees and some modern despisers of revivals and conversions, is strong. The same spirit that influenced the Pharisees governs those who talk of "decoy ducks" when Christians surround God's altar to consecrate themselves anew to his service; who laugh at prayer, or any special effort to save men; at a Christian life, anything above the standard of heathen morality. I would not like to stand in the shoes of such men; they occupy dangerous ground. As Jacob said of Simeon and

Levi, so we may say: "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united."

The teaching of the text on the unpardonable sin is not that of an isolated passage of Scripture. Paul speaks of a class of men whom "it is impossible to renew again unto repentance."—(Heb. 6: 6.) He is here describing total apostates, and declares their eternal doom. Again he says, "For if we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries."—(Heb. 10:26-27.) Here again the case of total apostates is considered; there being no sacrifice for sins available, they can but perish forever. St. John, in his first epistle, says, "There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he shall pray for it."—(Chap. 5: 16.) That can only be an unpardonable sin, for the pardon of which no prayer can be offered. While Judas Iscariot was plotting the betrayal, Jesus prayed and said of his disciples, "None is lost but the son of perdition." Of the same Judas, our Lord said, "Woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed; it had been good for that man if he had not been born."—(Matt. 26: 24.) Mr. Jukes admits that the words concerning Judas "declare an awful doom," and that his case "seems as dark as night."—(p. 131.) These Scriptures are confirmatory of the doctrine taught in the gospel by Matthew, Mark and Luke. Paul and John show the unpardonable sin was not confined to the time of our Lord, but that it may be committed to-day.

An objector may say, "You prove too much. Jesus says all sins are pardonable but one; you discover several others, thus making Scripture contradict itself." I reply, I make Scripture do nothing: I simply take its own utterances, which are in no sense contradictory. Total apostacy, as in the case of Judas, and the instances cited by Paul, may, and evidently does, include the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. The men referred to are regarded as beyond moral recovery, and must, therefore, to make his words true, have committed the sin described by Christ. The effects mentioned are immediately or remotely from the same cause.

That there is an unpardonable sin is quite consistent with the fact that Christ died for all men. We are under no necessity to commit the sin; we are free to resist all temptations in that direction. Grace is offered us which we may use for our personal safety and God's glory.

That there is an unpardonable sin is quite consistent with the fact that God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. The blasphemer against the Holy Ghost must perish, but, as regards God, unwillingly. There are offences against human law that cannot be condoned. Who will deny to the Most High the right to set a limit to human crime against himself? As the source of all life and law, God violates no good principle, in saying, by the mouth of his son Jesus, to the transgressor, "Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther."

It is doubtful if men who commit the unpardonable sin live long afterwards upon the earth. Their probation is practically over; their life has no moral object; they can live only for evil. The strong probability is that, like Judas Iscariot, their days are few and evil.

The unpardonable sin teaches the deity of the Holy Ghost. He cannot be a mere creature or influence against whom it is possible to sin without remedy. Peter's address to Ananias settles the point: "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? * * * Thou has not lied unto men but unto God."—(Acts 5:3-4.) This text is unequivocal on the doctrine of the Godhead of the third person in the Trinity. We should never forget to reverence the Holy Spirit, to adore him equally with the Father and the Son. It is matter of experience that where the Spirit of God is most honored, the cause of religion thrives best. If we have erred in the past, let us mend the fault in the future, and present to the Eternal Spirit the profoundest homage of our hearts.

We may conclude we have not committed the unpardonable sin by the trouble which the apprehension causes us, and by our horror of it. The real sinners are quiet on the subject. I should judge such a class to be those of whom St. Paul speaks, "Who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."—(Ephes. 4:19.) Past feeling! A fearful state of heart, a fearful outlook for the future. Watching against all sin is the surest preventative of the sin unpardonable. Do we do this? We cannot be safe while sin has dominion over us; in an evil hour we may be tempted to pass the limit of pardonable transgressions. If so, who can save? My unsaved hearer, abandon all sin. In the lines of Young:

"Give thy mind sea-room; keep it wide of earth,
That rock of souls immortal; cut thy cord;
Weigh anchor; spread the sails; call every wind;
Eye thy great Pole-Star; make the land of life."

The doctrine of the New Testament in regard to the unpardonable sin proves the teachings of Universalism and Restorationism to be untrue. Those systems declare all sin is pardonable, either in this world or in the next; Jesus Christ and His apostles teach that there is a sin absolutely unpardonable. That the Pharisees perpetrated a sin never to be forgiven, Christ Himself shows in the text and parallel passages. This is the view of Wesley in his "Notes on the New Testament;" of Dr. A. Clarke, the commentator; of the Rev. R. Watson, as shown in his "Biblical and Theological Dictionary;" of Kitto, the author of the "Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature," of Bishop Pearson, as shown in his "Exposition of the Creed," and of many other authors too numerous to mention. Confining the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost to the Pharisees of our Lord's time, if they, as Christ says, "hath never forgiveness," then Universalism is a fable; the loss of one soul destroys both its name and assumptions. We have seen, by the testimony of other Scriptures, that we are not warranted in restricting this sin to the Pharisees; this makes the case so much stronger against the theory that all will be saved. We can only conclude from the foregoing premises, that Universalism, and its twin-sister, Restorationism, are anti-Biblical, misleading and dangerous. Together, they form a false beacon, luring the voyager upon the rock-bound coast; they are a current sweeping on to the maelstrom of personal ruin; they cast about them the fitful glare of a false hope, to be succeeded by the intense darkness of the under world. Let us not suffer ourselves to be deceived by a sort of spiritual clairvoyance. I urge you, my hearers, to have done with Utopian theory, and take to your hearts the plain facts so clearly stamped upon the page of inspiration. Universalism demands impeachment at the hands of every minister of Christ. As a heresy it is too presumptuous and insinuating to have the silence of contempt. I impeach it in the name of that God whose nature it misrepresents, whose purposes it defames and tries to make odious to the human mind and heart; I impeach it in the name of the Bible, whose doctrines it ignores in nearly every instance, whose solemn warnings of coming judgment it holds up to popular ridicule, and whose beauty it endeavors to mar by a system of piecemeal perversion opposed to ordinary integrity and every rule of sound criticism; I impeach it in the name of humanity, whose champion it professes to be, as trifling with the souls of men regarding the nature and obligations of the present life, and as hawking round a picture of the future simply the product of its own unlicensed ingenuity. In the name of the generations past who lived and died in the old faith; in the name of the Christian churches of to-day, which are one in fundamental doctrine, I arraign it as unworthy of public confidence, as injurious to the morals of youth and to the best interests of mature manhood. Evidence sufficient has been presented during the delivery of these discourses to sustain the impeachment. To the mind of every intelligent person, it goes out of court bearing the brand of conviction, and to undergo its appropriate sentence of unmeasured condemnation.

